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*"I'm thinking of red underpants"*

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# ON REPEAT

THE SOUNDS RATTLING ROUND THE SKULLS  
OF THE NME STAFF THIS WEEK



## ALABAMA SHAKES

Heavy Chevy

This lot must be doing something right, what with Russell Crowe turning up to their recent NME Awards Show. And we all know he has impeccable music taste, as his band 30 Odd Foot Of Grunts proved. Ahem. This bracing shot of rock'n'soul, featuring devilish slide guitar, isn't slated to appear on their debut, so make the most of it now.

**Luke Lewis, Editor, NME.COM**

## GRIMES

Song For Ric

Worship-worthy electronic weirdo Claire Boucher guest-edited blog Gorilla Vs Bear last week, and among the many joys she posted (cat gifs aside) was this collaboration with Majical Cloudz, who guests on her 4AD debut, which chirrups and fizzles like flirting Pokémon.

**Emily Mackay, writer**

## SANTIGOLD

Disparate Youth

Against strutting guitars, playful bass and dawn-bright keyboards Santi's singing about "a life worth fighting for". It's a hymn to kicking against the pricks of conformity, despite the problems that sticking out from the crowd can cause. But when it comes to sticking or twisting, Santigold has always been about the latter.

**Priya Elan, Assistant Editor, NME.COM**

## SMILER FT LANA DEL REY

Spender

Even before officially turning 'Hollywood sadcore', Lizzy Grant had the whole medicated sex kitten thing down pat. Her cover of 'Big Spender' on this 2010 track sounds tantalisingly vacant, though the effect is rather ruined when Smiler lumbers in with his proto-bosh backing track...

**Dan Martin, writer**

## WILLIS EARL BEAL

Monotony

There's a lot of excitement about Willis Earl Beal's first ever UK dates, taking place this week – making it doubly impressive that Beal's conjured up all this

fervour with little more than a badly recorded acoustic strum and a gently mind-melting voice. It's a disarmingly simple combination, but never monotonous.

**Eddie Smack, writer**

## CHARLI XCX

I'll Never Know

Exclusive London Fashion Week track which won't be on the fast-rising 19-year-old's debut album? Wait, come back! 'I'll Never Know' is actually an understated gem, gliding along a catwalk of choppy steel drums and louche keys – though we're still not sure how she got the black and pink rave goth get-up past the LFW fashion police...

**Rick Martin, News Editor**

## DIPLO

Express Yourself

What with writing books and helping Usher stay up to the minute, you might expect young Diplo to have put activities under his own name on the back burner, but no – here he is with his most straightahead banger in ages, aided by Jamaican dancehall singer Nicky Da B.

**Liam Cash, writer**

## SUN KIL MOON

Sunshine In Chicago

This twinkling acoustic number from Mark Kozelek's new SKM album wins a prize for its utterly charming, wry line about the perils of ageing: "My band played here a lot in the '90s when we had lots of female fans/And fuck they all were cute/And now I just sign posters for guys in tennis shoes". Them's the breaks.

**Laura Snapes, Assistant Reviews Editor**



## KASABIAN

Narcotic Farm No II

Two questions arise from the first new material since 'Velociraptor!': 1) Where the fuck is Tom? (Serge sings, Meighan's not even in the vid.) 2) What drugs are they on? (It was posted in demo form as 'Preliminary Research Expeditions Into The Spirit World' last month.) The only certainty? It's awesome.

**Mike Williams, Deputy Editor**

TRACK  
OF  
THE  
WEEK

## ARCTIC MONKEYS

R U Mine?

In what we've come to expect from the playful, elusive Monkeys these days, 'R U Mine?' appeared out of nowhere on Monday morning (February 27), introduced by Sex Pistol-turned-Los Angeles radio DJ Steve Jones on his KROQ show. Just in case anyone needed affirmation that Alex and co have left their musically obtuse streak eating dust – further affirmation, that is, following the wickedly immediate 'Suck It and See' and Helters' rather less than artful dabblings in

desert rudery – well, this is definitely it.

But while their taste for an unpredictable release might be keen as ever, and though the riffs (and the sunglasses) hark back to the Homme-helmed days

*It wriggles like snakes under the skin, an itching, thrilling thing*

of 'Humbug', this is no return to the dustbowl. In fact, 'R U Mine?' merges hooks that nod to the meaty pound of 'Songs For The Deaf' – some of the most immediate Alex has ever written (or perhaps half-borrowed) – with the kind of fuzz-box squall he was knocking out circa 'Favourite Worst Nightmare' track 'Teddy Picker'. The result wriggles like snakes under skin, an itching, thrilling thing. "Satisfaction feels like a distant memory", he states, and despite Helters chorusing the words back at him in falsetto like some '60s girl band ingénue, we can't help but strenuously disagree with the sentiment...

**Jamie Fullerton, Features Editor**



**NEW!**

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# UPFRONT

WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MUSIC  
THIS WEEK

*Edited by Rick Martin*

**“YOU THINK THIS LOOKS  
NUTS? WAIT UNTIL YOU  
SEE THE NEXT VIDEO...”**

*After the release of ‘Rella’ – 2012’s most controversial video so far – **Odd Future** associate  
Lucas Vercetti inadvertently gives us the lowdown on what’s coming next*



MAIN  
EVENT

By now, you should know this much: Odd Future don't do understated. So when the video for their latest track 'Rella'

down. Not that Tyler even thinks there's anything to talk about. "Someone told me today, 'I didn't get the video,'" he tweeted last week. "It's nothing to get. It's just random thoughts. People think too fucking much."

Which is bullshit, obviously. There's a smart mind at work here, one that knows how to make maximum impact in a hundred different ways. Here's the five biggest talking points from the year's most insane video so far:

**CRACKS**

Of, er, more than one variety. An oversized rump satirises the hip-hop booty cliché, but the moment where 'Rella' transforms from comedic to controversial comes at 1:18, as rapper Domo Genesis slaps a passing girl in the face. Even more inexplicably, when her head tips back, she morphs from black to Asian. Whatever the point – if there is one – it's precision engineered to shock.

**CROTCH LASERS**

Easily the most innovative 'pussy' gag we've ever seen in a rap video, Hodgy Beats unloads a series of lasers from his crotch, turning passing females into cats. While dressed as Robocop. Making wank motions. And spraying them with a tarry slurry. Brilliantly disgusting stuff.

**CENTAUR**

If the opening two-thirds of 'Rella' are precision engineered to shock then amuse, the final third is all about tapping into Tyler's twisted side. His downright scary Centaur persona is a brain-bending nod to Greek mythology that cements Tyler's position as music's premier nutcase.

**COKE**

Is Tyler straight-edge? He's said as much in his lyrics and interviews ("I don't need drugs, except for albuterol, prednisone and Ritalin," he commented last year) without expressly confirming it. How does he add fuel to fire here? Snort a load of *gak out* – rather than up – his nose. It's another way in which 'Rella' subverts hip-hop video clichés – and a surefire reason you won't be seeing it on daytime MTV any time soon.

**CRYING**

'Rella' ends with one of the kids who's been bouncing in a car throughout the video suddenly bursting into tears. Genuine emotion? A moment of self-realisation? One final unsettling visual? As Lucas has already said, we'll find out the answers to this and more in the 'NY' video.

So strap yourself in: Odd Future are back and more polarising, more twisted, and more controversial than ever. Watch them divide and conquer the year all over again.

For exclusive interviews with Odd Future, see [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video)

WHO THE  
HELL IS  
LUCAS  
VERCETTI?

Ten things you need to know about 'OF Tape Vol 2's cover star

● Check out YouTube clips of the band hanging out around Fairfax in LA. Or magazine photos. He's the blonde kid in the background.

● He met Tyler back in 2008 while skating in LA. "I didn't know he was a rapper back then," he says. "We bonded over skating – then I found out about Odd Future."

● They were introduced by Julian Berman, OF's touring photographer. Lucas started selling merch on the tours.

● He's now Tyler's official BFF – and is namechecked in 'Rella'. "Me and Lucas got a couple of pickles/ And met up with bitches, gave 'em cum on their dimples", spits Tyler.

● Lucas runs Odd Future's merch shop in LA, Golf Wang. "It's not a pop up shop now, it's permanent," he says.

● He reckons he's actually a member of Odd Future. "I don't rap," he clarifies. "But you don't need to to be part of OF."

● He claims not to be into hip-hop. "Hardcore's more my thing," he enthuses. "I'm hyped that Refused are coming back. I love Biohazard."

● He's already been in a number of OF videos, including the clips for Tyler's 'She' and Pusha T collab 'Trouble On My Mind'.

● He's non-plussed by the fame that being a cover star will probably bring, saying, "I don't see it as a piece of history. I just want to see my face in Best Buy."

● And he sees no parallels with Chris McClure, the cover star of Arctic Monkeys' debut album. "He's a dick, fuck that guy. If he isn't me... fuck him."

## Future thinking

What else are Tyler and co up to at the moment? This

**SIDE-PROJECTS!**

Tyler, the Creator, is a multi-talented artist. He's not just a rapper, but also a producer, writer, and actor. He's been featured in several movies, including 'The Love and Theft' and 'The Love and Theft 2'. He's also been in a few TV shows, including 'The Love and Theft' and 'The Love and Theft 2'.

**WORKING WITH KANYE!**

Tyler, the Creator, has been working with Kanye West on several projects. He's been featured on Kanye's album 'The Life of Pablo' and has been working on a new album with Kanye. He's also been working on a new movie with Kanye.

**MAKING A TV SHOW!**

Tyler, the Creator, is planning to make a TV show. He's been working on the show for a while and has been featured in several episodes. He's also been working on a new movie with Kanye.

**GOING OUT ON TOUR!**

Tyler, the Creator, is going out on tour. He's been working on the tour for a while and has been featured in several episodes. He's also been working on a new movie with Kanye.

**WELCOMING EARL BACK INTO THE FOLD?**

Tyler, the Creator, is welcoming Earl back into the fold. He's been working on the project for a while and has been featured in several episodes. He's also been working on a new movie with Kanye.





# LIBERTINES EXCLUSIVE! LOST ALBUMS, UNHEARD SONGS ...AND PETE'N'CARL REUNITED

Alan McGee sold off a stash of rare Libs demos last week – NME heard the songs and got the inside story on plans to release the band's 'Holy Grail'

**T**he Libertines' former drummer, Paul 'Mr Razzcocks' Dufour, has confirmed to NME that he, Pete Doherty, Carl Barât and John

Hassall have all tentatively agreed to release a host of songs recorded before the band signed to Rough Trade in 2001.

The news came in the same week Pete and Carl were seen drinking together at London's Camden Head pub (February 23), a move that suggests warmer relations between the songwriters at present. Dufour, who played drums full time for The Libertines from their formation in 1998 up until 2000, has been trying to release the 18 professionally recorded songs for some time – "I've had words with Pete personally about it," he tells NME – but it's only now that all parties have agreed to go ahead. Though a record label hasn't yet been confirmed, Dufour says the tracks could be released "as early as June".

But something that's perhaps even more tantalising, given that some of those audio tracks have been leaked online over the years, is the news that the drummer has also unearthed six video recordings of early Libertines gigs, which he wants to release too. NME has seen one of these, a 40-minute show recorded at The Kings Head pub in Fulham around 1999, and it shows the band in extraordinary and somewhat surreal form. Playing to an almost non-existent audience, they run through 15 pre-Rough Trade songs, with Pete and Carl's onstage banter frequently reaching comical levels. At one point, Pete impersonates a Pontins redcoat, while Carl ends the gig by tap dancing along to a cover of 'Dream A Little Dream Of Me', the old standard most famously recorded by The Mamas & The Papas.

Ironically, Dufour was almost beaten to releasing some of the early songs this past week by former Libertines manager Alan McGee, who had given his copy of the tracks – on a burned CD-R, no less – to Stockport auctioneers Omega as part of a huge sale that includes many of his personal belongings. But when word got out that plans were in place for the band to release the songs themselves, McGee pulled the CD from his auction, telling NME, "I've



The way they were in 2003 and (inset) Alan McGee

decided to keep them – I quite like them." Nevertheless, the ex-Creation Records boss still sold another eight CDs of rare Libertines material, and fetched £601 for the lot. Although many of the songs were mixes of tracks from 'The Libertines' which have already appeared online,

there were three unreleased gems among the collection, which auctioneer Paul Fairweather played to NME before the sale. Some versions

of these will already be familiar to Libs fans, but none of the recordings currently available sound anything like McGee's. Here's what we heard.

## 'BRECK ROAD LOVER'

Although this song was written (and recorded) in The Libertines' pre-Rough Trade days, McGee's version dates from around 2004, meaning Mick Jones is the

likely producer. Featuring a flamenco-style guitar solo played by both

Pete and Carl, it's atmospheric, sad-sounding and easily good enough to have been a single around that time.

## 'BOUND TOGETHER'

The scrappiest-sounding of the three tracks, this 90-second duet features Pete and Carl singing in tandem about how they're "bound together, bound forever by drink and by drugs". In a word: emotional.

## 'PLAN A'

A re-recording of one of the band's early B-sides, this version sees Pete and Carl take turns to sing the scathing lyrics, one line each, and features a sinister piano line that wouldn't sound too out of place on the soundtrack to *The Godfather*. Brilliantly, just as you think it's about to end, the band start playing an 'I Get Along'-style guitar line and kick it into an entirely new gear.

## That's your lot

Libertines rarities weren't the only things to go under the hammer at the Omega auction. Here's some other highlights

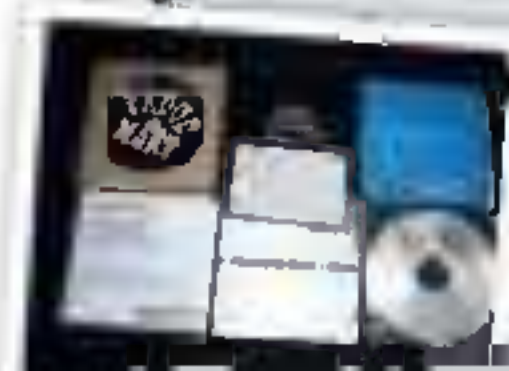
### OASIS DEMOS

Noel gave this very cassette to a mate as Oasis were demoing tracks. The contents include alternate mixes of 'Columbia' and 'Shaker Maker' (Noel's handwriting makes the title two words). The same tracks were on the 'Live Demonstration' demo that eventually got them signed to Creation. **SOLD FOR: £750**



### JOHN SQUIRE ARTWORK

Put simply, it was the best prize ever. In 1989 NME commissioned John Squire to paint a huge canvas to give away to a lucky reader – and this is it. If you're reading this, Freddie Cowan, get your crayons out. **UNSOLD (RESERVE: £8,000)**





# WHY ADAM LAMBERT JOINING QUEEN IS A RIGHT ROYAL DISASTER

The 'flamboyant' American *Idol* runner-up will sing with the rock legends this summer, but as **Hamish MacBain** points out, replacing your iconic frontman is almost always a bad idea



Should we be surprised about Adam Lambert – that's former *American Idol* runner-up Adam Lambert – becoming Queen's

new frontman, as was announced last week? Not in the slightest. For years now, Brian May's *raison d'être* has been to partake in a never-ending succession of credibility-pummelling collaborations. The latest – out this week – is with bloody Dappy, on the N-Dubzer's second solo single, 'Rockstar'. And that is a long way from being the most embarrassing record he's played a solo on. Give, anyone?

We've become anaesthetised to Brian May guest guitar slots. There are just so many, and so many shut ones, that you barely even think about them. It's only when he starts going out under the Queen banner that his actions grate, and this time severely so. Queen were never "cool" in their day – see the notorious 'Is This Man A Prat?' *NME* headline next to a picture of Freddie Mercury in 1977 – but the sheer outrageous brilliance of their songs has meant that pretty much everyone, even the most-holier-than-thou knobs, now have to concede that they were one of the best bands ever.

Our Bri, though, with the assistance of Roger Taylor, is doing his level best to rally against this shift in perception. Announcing Lambert as the new singer – albeit just for the one show at Sonisphere – is much, much worse than when they got Paul Rodgers to do it. Then they had the excuse, given Rodgers' previous with Free and Bad Company, that it was actually a "collaboration". Plus, they took the cover-up job even further by making an album together, albeit an album off which a mere two tunes made it into their nightly



"That's great Adam, but you're gonna need a white vest and a big 'tache'"

Hours after the announcement, the website Holy Moly commented: "For perspective, imagine Paul and Ringo performing as The Beatles with Olly Murs on vocals, and saying: 'I think this is something John Lennon would've approved of'. You'd spit in their faces with rightful disgust." It was and is hard to disagree. You'd have more respect for them

if they just went, "Look, headlining a festival is a right laugh, we want to do it, and also, Adam Lambert is gay and flamboyant and all that, so what's the fucking problem?"

The whole "here's our new singer" thing has only worked once, ever: with AC/DC. They overcame the problem of Bon Scott choking on his own vomit in 1980 by hiring Brian Johnson – the only man alive whose voice sounded even more like a nailgun – asking him to conjure the spirit of their friend, and within five months putting out 'Back In Black', the third best-selling album of all time. No other rock band has managed it, because it's

impossible (take note here, Gallows). Black Sabbath tried it, it was shit. A permutation of Thin Lizzy are still doing it, it's worse. To state the bleeding obvious, however much of an inimitable "guitar genius" you may think you are, your work can be replicated, accurately and seamlessly, by a professional. Essentially you are operating a machine. You couldn't have a show in the style of *The Voice* for guitarists, because all the good people churning out 'Whole Lotta Love' would sound exactly the same. Anyone who thinks that, blindfolded, they would be able to pick out Jimmy Page in a line-up with good imitators is just deluded.

Singers are the human, irreplaceable element of any band, and Freddie Mercury is among the most irreplaceable human beings ever to walk the earth. Trying to replace him with someone as serviceable as Paul Rodgers was preposterous. Trying to do so with someone who was and is a facsimile of the original is even worse, and trying to then pass it off as anything other than karaoke is worse still. If "Queen" can bash out a 'Back In Black' in time for their live comeback, then fair enough. But they can't and won't.

**"It's not about being better than Freddie!"**

*Adam Lambert fights his corner*

**WHAT DO YOU SAY TO PEOPLE WHO THINK QUEEN SHOULD JUST BE LEFT ALONE?**

Adam: "That's really up to Brian and Roger, it's their band. At this point they feel what they're doing is appropriate and it's their prerogative. If someone feels like their legacy should be left alone then they're missing out on a great concert, that's the bottom line. The guys wrote great music, and they're playing it for all the fans who still wanna hear it. It's their band! It's their business."

**CAN A BAND EVER BE AS GOOD WITH A NEW SINGER?**

"It's just different. A different singer stepping in, nothing is gonna beat the original. No-one's ever going to be better than Freddie Mercury, never. But I don't think that's the point. I don't think it's a competition, it's about music and it's about making people feel something. It's not about beating the original."

**HOW ARE YOU GONG TO CHANNEL FREDDIE? ARE YOU STUDYING THE DVDS?**

"I'm definitely listening to all of the vocal parts, and yes, I have been doing some research. I've been watching things, but I have to say that it's very important for me as an artist, and for my own personal integrity, to make sure that I'm being myself onstage. I feel like it would be insulting to the fans and to the band to get up there and try to directly copy Mr Mercury. It's obviously a very delicate situation, and I wanna treat it with the utmost respect."

**Guitarists just operate a machine; singers are human and irreplaceable**

30-song onslaught of classics made famous by Freddie Mercury. It all seemed a rather half-hearted attempt to justify the fact that they just wanted to play those songs in massive stadiums again, which you can understand, because you imagine that blasting out 'We Will Rock You' to tens of thousands is probably quite addictive.

This time, we are being offered nothing except Brian May's standard issue "Well, Freddie would have loved it" schtick.



# WHAT WE LEARNED FROM BLUR'S LIVE COMEBACK

*A new tune and hints at the Hyde Park setlist – but it wasn't all plain sailing*

**GOT A STORY?**  
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**B**lur marked their comeback with two very different gigs last week: an understated return for Damon and Graham at a pre Brit Awards show at London's O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire and a brash greatest hits set to celebrate bagging the Outstanding Contribution To Music Award at the big night itself two days later. The contrast was typical of Britpop's arch agitators – and offered some big clues as to what to expect at their giant Olympic blowout at Hyde Park in August. Here's what we learned:

## THEY'RE MASSIVELY RING RUSTY

Damon and Graham's shakiness on Sunday was almost forgivable – they were playing a new tune written "a few weeks ago" (more on that later). But the Brits underlined just how under-rehearsed Blur are right now – something even Justin from The Vaccines, who were also

at the ceremony, noticed. "Comments about it weren't unanimously positive," he told *NME*. "I thought it was great and really refreshing that there was an act on who weren't polished and pitch perfect."

Whatever, Blur are a long way off their brilliant 2009 form.

## HYDE PARK WILL HAVE HITS AND TWISTS

Graham told *NME* last week that the band would strike a balance between

"High Street Blur" and the "backroads" fan favourites. Closing the Brits with 'This Is A Low' – the midpoint between Blur's hits and album track fan favourites – underlined this perfectly. So expect at least one 'Essex Dogs' for every 10 'Girls & Boys' in August

## DAMON AND GRAHAM ARE MATES AGAIN

The dynamic between this pair has always been central to Blur, but the

exchange of grins throughout 'He Thought Of Cars' at in Shepherd's Bush told you everything you need to know about the current state of play in their relationship. "We have a deep respect and admiration for each other," Graham said of band relations in *NME* last week. "That won't change."

## THE NEW TUNE SOUNDS BETTER WITH A FULL BAND

The Kinksian pianos and understated guitars of 'Under The Westway' sounded half-finished live, but as *NME* reported last week after hearing the full band version at the band's rehearsal space, it's sounding "pretty much perfect" – and a shoo-in for Hyde Park

## DAMON'S SPEECHES ARE DEAD BORING

Not only did Blur cut Nation's Sweetheart<sup>TM</sup> Adele's Album Of The Year thankfest short, Damon also gave one of the duller acceptance speeches in living memory. Rather than say something arch/funny/controversial as we know he can do, Damon simply



Damon tries to find middle C, Shepherd's Bush

chose to thank an endless list of industry chums – leaving Graham doing his stretches and Alex dreaming of cheese behind him.

Ultimately, Blur's big double-header wasn't quite the celebratory blow-out everyone expected. It's whetted our appetite for the summer and new material, but they need to sharpen up. They've got 166 days to pull it together for Hyde Park – when a global audience will be watching. No pressure then...

ANDY WILLISHER, RICHARD JOHNSON

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# WIN LOADS OF TICKETS! SEE DIZZEE AND AZEALIA! WATCH THE LIBS FILM! PARTY AT T IN THE PARK!

*This week we're giving you a chance to attend not one, not two, but three amazing events*

**F**irst up, we've got a pair of VIP weekend camping tickets for Wakestock festival up for grabs. Taking place in Cardigan Bay, north Wales, July 6-8, the bash already boasts the likes of Dizzee Rascal, Azealia Banks and Katy B.

And if that wasn't enough, we've also got a pair of tickets for an exclusive fans-only preview screening of Libertines documentary *There Are No Innocent Bystanders* in London on March 6.

Directed by legendary *NME* photographer Roger Sargent, the film charts the band's fractious reunion shows of 2010.

Also, don't forget there's still time to enter our amazing competition to be at this year's T In The Park – your chance to win two weekend tickets to see

the likes of Snow Patrol, The Stone Roses, Kasabian, Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds and Nicki Minaj in Balado on July 6-8. Here's how to get your name into the mix.

## HOW TO ENTER

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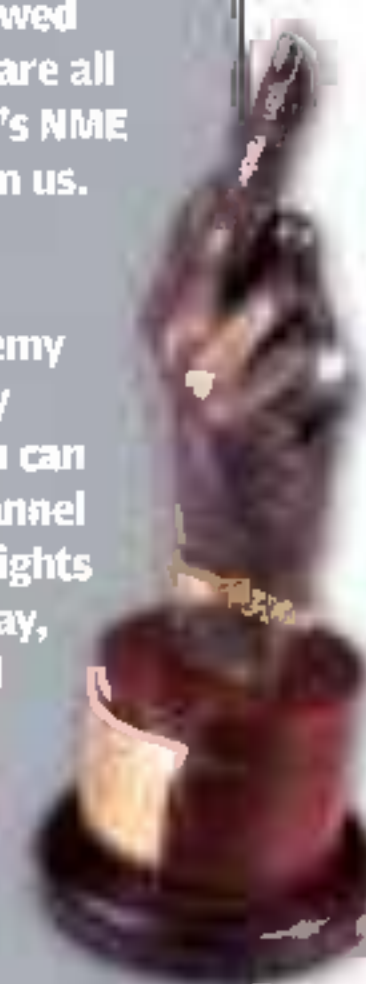
March 6, 2012. T In The Park competition is open to over 18s only. For more information and regular updates from The T Lady visit [tinthepark.com](http://tinthepark.com). For the facts about alcohol, visit [drinkaware.co.uk](http://drinkaware.co.uk).



## NME AWARDS 2012 TUNE IN TO CATCH ALL THE ACTION

*Don't miss the musical night of the year*

THE RED CARPET IS BEING rolled out and the hallowed middle-finger trophies are all polished: yep, this year's NME Awards are almost upon us. Our celebration of the world's greatest music takes place at O2 Academy Brixton this Wednesday (February 29) – and you can relive the action on Channel 4. Half an hour of highlights screen on T4 on Saturday, March 3 at 9.25am, and the full broadcast follows at 11.55pm. Who'll be victorious? Who'll get most sozzled? Who'll finish the night atop a table, like Dave Grohl last year? Tune in for all the news, gossip and exclusive interviews.



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Oh come on Paul. Three years on, we were expecting a new hat



## MAXIMO ADDED TO GREAT ESCAPE FESTIVAL

*Mystery Jets and Gross Magic also on bill*

MAXIMO PARK HAVE BEEN confirmed to play an NME gig at Brighton Dome as part of this year's Great Escape. Paul Smith and co are promising an "exciting, emotional and energetic show" at the event (May 10-12), along with new material. "We'll play three or four new songs from the album," Smith comments. "We're the kind of band who rise to the occasion." Mystery Jets and Gross Magic will also play NME shows, while a slew of names have been added to the weekend bill, including: Alabama Shakes, Rolo Tomassi, Errors, Madeon, Micachu & The Shapes, We Have Band, Tanlines, Koreless, New Look, Lower Than Atlantis, Disclosure, Duologue, Kwes, Wim, Jonquil, Max Raptor, Milagres, NZCA/Lines, Dillon and Loney, Dear. Head to [escapegreat.com](http://escapegreat.com) and [NME.COM/news](http://NME.COM/news) for more details.



# MAXIMUM IMPACT

Three years and one awful solo project on from their last album, *Maximo Park* are finally readying their fourth LP – and singer Paul Smith insists they're back to their giddy indie best

## IN THE WORKS

"Even within the groups who made their debut albums around us, it always felt like we were an island," declares Maximo Park

mainman Paul Smith. He's explaining how he and his charges, unlike their fellow class of 2004-05 alumni Kaiser Chiefs, The Futureheads *et al*, plan to avoid fading into the shadows when they deliver their fourth and as-yet-untitled new album this summer. "Too many bands try and jump on a bandwagon now. We've never done that and I don't think we can."

So, no choose your-own-tracklisting

brouhaha or novelty a cappella offerings from the Tyne and Wear fivesome, then. Instead, Smith says that they've spent the three years since dropping last LP 'Quicken The Heart' tapping back into what made us go all giddy for them in the first place: stadium-sized choruses and pop hooks. "We wrote loads of songs – there were maybe 40 of them, and a lot just didn't sound like Maximo Park," Smith tells *NME*. "We were trying to be something that we're not, and you end up sounding not as good as

the things that inspired you."

Thankfully, Smith has left the sonic war crime that was his 2010 solo album 'Margins' behind to focus on what he does best. With sessions overseen by Pixies and Foo Fighters

producer Gil Norton, the frontman says it's their "most diverse" album to date, taking in everything from acoustic ditties and piano ballads to balls-out rock numbers with guitars that are "as heavy as possible". A couple of tracks in contention have already begun to surface during live shows too, including the

## DETAILS

**Recorded:** Rockfield, Wales; **Moles,** Bath  
**Producer:** Gil Norton (Foo Fighters, Pixies)  
**Songs slated for inclusion:** 'Wave Of Fear', 'Banlieue'  
**Expected release:** Summer 2012  
**Label:** Co-Operative

dark and dangerous 'Banlieue' and the more familiar, high-NRG 'Waves Of Fear'.

The big question now is whether the three-year gap between albums will be Maximo's making or breaking? And was that hiatus necessary to freshen things up, or does the lengthy wait between LPs mean the ship has sailed? "We needed a break," concludes Smith. "The more you do the same thing over and over again, it's going to get repetitive and boring for somebody, whether it's the people listening to you or the band themselves."

He's certainly convinced they made the right choice to go away for so long – come summer, we'll know too...



# PIECES OF ME FRED MACPHERSON

*Spector's frontman on The White Stripes, the awful truth about Toploader and the things he learned from watching Brookside*

## My first album

**'ONKA'S BIG MOKA' BY  
TOPLOADER**

"The day I got this CD was the day I found out Toploader didn't write 'Dancing In The Moonlight'. It was absolutely crushing. I lost my faith in music and I'm still struggling to get it back."

## My first gig

**...AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY  
THE TRAIL OF DEAD**

"This was at the Kentish Town Forum in London, way back when Zane Lowe was still on Xfm. My friends and I would spend every night trying to win the gig tickets he gave away on his show. ...Trail Of Dead was the first time I got lucky and it was insane, just watching this band I'd never heard of playing at ear-splitting volume and then destroying all of their equipment."

**The first song I fell in love with  
'HOTEL YORBA' BY  
THE WHITE STRIPES**

"I think I actually watched a few of my friends fall in love to this song. It was the first thing my first band learned, and still probably one of the only songs I can play on guitar. G, C, D, I think. Now please start a band so I can stop."

## My favourite lyric

**'BLACK SHIPS ATE THE SKY' BY  
CURRENT 93**

"'If I was unborn, I would have nothing to be grateful for/I would have never seen love/I would have never held cats/I would never have buried my friends and prayed for their souls.' David Tibet is one of my favourite living lyricists - he has what I can only describe as an inimitably apocalyptic flow. The first time I heard these lines I couldn't stop rewinding them; they kind of just sum everything up."

## My favourite TV show

**BROOKSIDE**

"Phil Redmond's got a lot to answer for, but nobody could fuck with *Brookside* in its prime. Looking back at the programme now, I'm amazed my parents even let me watch it. It taught me everything about the world: guns, drugs, lesbians, incest and bodies buried under patios."

**My favourite painting  
THE UPAS, OR POISON TREE,  
IN THE ISLAND OF JAVA  
BY FRANCIS DANBY**

"It's this massive oil painting at the V&A of a tiny, poisonous tree that's turned a whole island into a desolate wasteland. It's completely abandoned bar a couple of skeletons and this man who can't even bear



to look. It reminds me of Dalston in the early hours of Saturday morning."

**Right now I love  
THE WEEKND**

"'Echoes Of Silence' - the last in his [Abel Tesfaye's] trilogy of mixtapes - is the perfect soundtrack to that horrible moment when you realise a party's well and truly over, but you're still there, still awake, still desperately trying to keep the dream alive."

## My favourite place

**THE PRINCESS DIANA AND DODI  
FAYED MEMORIAL**

"It's at the bottom of the stairwell in Harrods and is a beautiful tribute to two star-crossed lovers taken from us too soon. Almost as moving as the bronze statue of them, accompanied by an albatross, by the Egyptian escalator at door three."

Watch a live version of Spector's 'What You Wanted' at [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video) now



Clockwise from main: Fred falls for the glue-on-hand trick; ...Trail Of Dead, live; Brookside; Current 93's 'Black Ships Ate The Sky'; The White Stripes' 'Hotel Yorba'; Dodi and Di's shrine; The Weeknd's 'Echoes Of Silence'





## VERSUS

# PETER ROBINSON vs JASON DERULO

*The R&B man has some dangerous dance moves, but we'll have to disagree on his finest talent*



• Jason claims that his least impressive songs are "lost in the wilderness, never to be shown to the world"

• Does he not realise that if society is not able to learn from its mistakes, it is doomed to repeat them?

• Mind you, how bad can a Jason Derulo song actually be? It's probably total genius. Right? RIGHT?!

**Hello, Jason. We were first due to speak on Valentine's Day but that was cancelled due to romantic reasons. Did you have a nice evening?**

"I did. I spent half of it in the studio, but the other half I got to spend with my girl, so it was cool."

**You're in a neck brace at the moment, aren't you? Is it getting in the way of romance?**

"Well, the neck is a very romantic part so I haven't been able to use it at all, but besides that it's fine."

**You could turn it into a 'thing'. Like Nelly had a plaster for ages and that was alright.**

"Yes! I'm gonna trademark it!"

**Jason that's ridiculous. I'm not going to give you five quid next time I get whiplash. No, that's not on at all.**

"Oh no."

**We should explain to readers who may not be aware of the circumstances surrounding neckbracegate that you damaged your neck while rehearsing an elaborate dance move or, as you put it on Twitter, "tryin 2 push boundaries 4 YOU!"**

"Yes. My 'Future History' tour that I was rehearsing involved a lot of acrobatics and tumbling and all kinds of cool stuff to watch and during one of my back tucks I landed on my head and fractured my neck. It's called a hangman's break. I'm lucky to be here and talking to you!"

**You certainly are.**

"I view life from a different perspective now. It's another chance. It's another chance to appreciate life. It's been go-go-go for the last few years and it's been an amazing journey and it's been a dream come true, but I'm glad the world's slowed down for a second so that I can have a chance to take it in and spend time with my family."

**Are you sure this wasn't all a ruse to get time with your family?**

"No!"

**So you go to work one day, and you're doing a few dance moves. Next thing you know, you're almost dead!**

"Right! Yes. Anything could happen at any moment. It opens your eyes."



**It makes you think.**  
"It does."

**You say that this is all a dream come true. Are there specific things you're doing now that you previously dreamed of? To a point where you think you might have psychic abilities?**

"I don't know about psychic abilities..."

**In the video for your song 'What If you save someone's life when they're getting run over. That's a bit psychic.**

"Oh yeah. Well the whole video goes in reverse. It's all backwards. It's the same thing."

**If you were to have sadly died when landing on your head, would you rather have been known for your beard growing, or for your hat wearing?**

"Um... maybe my beard growing."

**I mean you're definitely a good singer, but you're not a perfect singer. But you ARE a perfect hat wearer. And a perfect beard grower.**

(Silence)

**So if I had to list my three favourite Jason Derulo things, it would go: hat wearing, beard growing, singing. What order would you put them in?**

"I'm best at singing, definitely."

**Do you have a message for NME readers?**

"Yes I do - come and check out 'Future History'."

## THIS WEEK'S TOP 20

## THE NME CHART

### NME RADIO

Hear the chart rundown first every Monday at 7pm on NME Radio  
[NME.COM/RADIO](http://NME.COM/RADIO)

### NME.COM

Listen to the Top 40 and learn more about each artist online  
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### NEW TO NME RADIO PLAYLIST

• ALPINES  
'Gold'  
• GORILLAZ  
'DoYaThing'  
• MORNING PARADE  
'Headlights'

- 1 36 ALABAMA SHAKES 'HOLD ON' (WYR 1300)
- 2 32 BENJAMIN FRANCIS LEFTWICH 'PICTURES' (UMWA)
- 3 14 WE ARE ARGUSTINES 'CHAPEL SONG' (TNA)
- 4 18 KASABIAN 'GOODBYE KISS' (CAPLAD)
- 5 6 THE BLACK KEYS 'GOLD ON THE CEILING' (JAGJAGS)
- 6 26 TRIBES 'WE WERE CHILDREN' (RIDE)
- 7 28 CLOCK OPERA 'ONCE AND FOR ALL' (WYR)
- 8 33 FINERS 'FROM DEER DREAM' (ROYAL)
- 9 2 ARCTIC MONKEYS 'BLACK TREACLE' (CAPLAD)
- 10 11 FOSTER THE PEOPLE 'DON'T STOP (COLOR ON THE WALLS)' (CAPLAD)
- 11 39 THE HORRORS 'CHANGING THE RAIN' (J)
- 12 20 MB3 'REUNION' (N5N)
- 13 38 THE MACCABEES 'FEEL TO FOLLOW' (FUS3)
- 14 30 BAND OF SKULLS 'BRUISES' (BROCK BANE)
- 15 9 NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH FLYING BIRDS 'DREAM ON' (SOLARWIND)
- 16 10 LANA DEL REY 'BORN TO DIE' (RCA)
- 17 34 BLEEDING KNEES CLUB 'NOTHING TO DO' (CAPLAD)
- 18 40 ZULU WINTER 'WE SHOULD BE SWIMMING' (N5N)
- 19 16 LADYHAWKE 'BLACK WHITE & BLUE' (WYR)
- 20 37 AZARI & III 'RECKLESS (WITH YOUR LOVE)' (WYR)

The NME Chart is compiled each week by NME Radio and is based on how many times each track has been played on the station over the previous seven days.



# RADAR

FUTURE STARS, BREAKING SCENES, NEW SOUNDS...

Edited by Matt Wilkinson



ABOUT  
TO  
BREAK

## HOODED FANG

*They brawl! They get bored! And back home in Canada? They rival Arcade Fire...*

**T**oronto-based Hooded Fang may just be starting to cause ripples on these shores, but across the Atlantic they've racked up enough notches on the creative bedpost to make even Dev Hynes look like a total slacker. Having formed back in 2007 when Daniel Lee (vocals/guitar) and April Alierno (bass) roped in some roommates to have a crack at some initial songwriting forays, the band started as a kind of Canadian Los Campesinos! – a seven-strong troupe playing glockenspiel-infused orchestral pop. They released an album called, er, 'Album' which was nominated alongside Arcade Fire for the Polaris Prize – the Canadian equivalent of a Mercury – and then... well, then they got bored. Losing three members in as many years ("Every year we have a big brawl and see who's the weakest," drummer D Alex Meeks states bluntly), they twiddled collective thumbs and – somehow – ended up with new album 'Tosta Mista' (due out March 12). It's a total 180 on their previous material, being a gem of a garage-rock record that brings to mind The Coral,

if they were into joyriding with Black Lips. "This is an evolving thing," shrugs Lee of the new direction. "We all like so many different genres of music and I find it really strange when someone DJs only drum'n'bass or something for, like, 25 years. I mean, don't they get bored?"

But Hooded Fang like to keep things interesting. Aside from their main band duties they also play in numerous side-projects, run a label (Daps Records) and work at April's artist-led play school, giving kids music lessons as well as putting on a host of all-ages shows. They're even helping out with Toronto's artistic unemployment levels: "A couple of the kids who started volunteering help run the shows now, so one's our bookkeeper," enthuses Alierno. As if all that wasn't enough, there's the small matter of the *next* Hooded Fang record – already almost complete and shaping up to be a "further expansion" on the ramshackle bent of 'Tosta Mista' – that's set to hit shelves before 2012 is out. Britain, you'd better start catching up quick, because this lot certainly aren't going to hang about. *Lisa Wright*

**BASED:** Toronto

**FOR FANS OF:** Black Lips, Fair Ohs  
**HEAR IT:** 'Tosta Mista' is released on March 12 via Full Time Hobby

**SEE THEM LIVE:** When they return to the UK in May

**ON NME.COM:** Stream tracks from the album

**BELIEVE IT OR NOT:** D Alex Meeks is a trained watchmaker. He was also raised on a zoo in South Carolina





# TAME IMPALA SIDE-PROJECT SPRINGS TO LIFE

*Australians map out world tour and new album while they've got time on their hands*

## RADAR NEWS

With Tame Impala on the back burner until late 2012, spin-off band Pond have told *Radar* they're planning to use their time wisely

– by touring as much as they can across the world. The trio, who release new album 'Beard Wives Denim' on March 12 in the UK, feature Tame Impala rhythm section Nick Allbrook and Jay Watson, with the latter confirming their plans from their Perth base. "We've got six months before Tame's gonna get going again," he explained, "so we're just going to work our arses off and do as much as possible and try to fit it all in. If fucking Jack White can do it, I don't see why we can't do it too!"

Recorded late last year, 'Beard Wives Denim' saw the band – who specialise in a heavier, more glam rock-indebted outlook than Tame – take over a farmhouse in southern Australia, where they honed 12 tracks in as many days. "We were all super frazzled for, you know, a host of reasons," Watson laughs

of the process, before adding with more than a hint of seriousness that "it's exciting to step out of the Tame Impala shadow". Not that there's likely to be much rivalry there – Tame mainman Kevin Parker has played drums for Pond in the past, and he also mixed the new record.

As well as a North American tour that will include five shows at SXSW in mid-March, Watson confirmed that the band will be heading over to the UK soon, hopefully by May, saying: "We're particularly excited to come to England because we've got a lot of good friends in London now." He added that they may even record a follow-up to 'Beard

*"It's exciting to step out of the Tame Impala shadow"*

JAY WATSON

Wives Denim' while over here: "We've already written the next one. We always write the title and then the songs before we even record the album. So it's going to be called 'Man, It Feels Like Space Again', and it's gonna be our 'Pet Sounds'-meets-MC5 opus..."

## The Buzz

*The rundown of the music, videos and scenes breaking forth from the underground this week*



### 1 BY THE SEA

Based in the Wirral, the aptly named By The Sea conjure up the kind of majesty that once made Shack's Mick Head so revered. They're sure to be tagged with comparisons to The Coral and La's, but really, like the 'Waterpistol' legends, they're Scouse revisionists rather than revivalists. And that's not all – scratch beneath the surface of their four online songs and you'll hear hints of early Verve, Beta Band and, on the superb 'Waltz Away', '89-era Stone Roses. The band have got a release on tidy vinyl-only label The Great Pop Supplement under their belts, with gigs in Liverpool and London pencilled in for early March.



### 2 ZULU'S DEBUT RELEASE

With a nine-track mini album, 'Way Of The Zulu' (cassette-only – although it comes with a free download) out on Stroll On Records on March 26, the Londoners stake a claim for being the capital's most in-yer-face punk brats of the moment. Ever thought the UK should have our very own Iceage? Well, now we kinda have...



### 3 MIKKY EKKO

The jury's still out on whether Nashville-based Mikky Ekko is actually the post-pop Jim Morrison or not, but his debut UK gig at London's Proud in late February had 95 per cent of the industry drooling into their G&Ts. He's been writing with Justin Parker lately – the same guy who co-wrote a little ditty called 'Video Games'...



### 4 THE SHUTES' 'ECHO OF LOVE'

The Isle Of Wight band return after going MIA for a few months. By the sounds of 'Echo Of Love' – released via Cross Keys Records on April 2, but available to listen to on [NME.COM/newmusic](http://NME.COM/newmusic) now, they've been schooling themselves deep in the art of British Sea Power-style eclecticism.



### 5 GOTSEEN.TV

Wanna stream your gig even though you're playing the worst venue known to man? Good, because now you can! Gotseen.tv exists primarily to let new bands broadcast their shows live online. It's a wicked idea – and one that also allows you to play the classic game of 'trying to spot Steve Lamacq at a gig' from the comfort of your own living room.

## BAND CRUSH



Jessie Ware on her favourite new artist

"Brey is a producer from London. He's really great, I think he's really talented. He makes this kind of Alfred Hitchcock-meets-booty bass stuff. He helped out on my album a bit actually, on a track called 'Running'. I love what he does and the sound he makes. It's mad – just like him."



SCENE  
REPORTHUW  
STEPHENS'  
ONES TO  
WATCH

*Blazing through the underground  
with Radio 1's new music overlord*



Oh hello. I've been enjoying the tripped-out debut album by Gang Colours recently. He is one man called William, and 'The Keychain Collection' is a really minimal, soulful album of electronica that is deep and smooth, flowing effortlessly from start to finish.

I enjoyed him live recently too, as he balanced a new piece of kit on an old vintage piano. I was at Eurosonic festival back at the start of January in Groningen, the Netherlands, and witnessed a great gig by Vadoinmessico. They're an interesting band who have big ideas and put on a brilliant performance, toying with a natural, folk sound and a real sense of ambition in what they do. They're London-based with members from Mexico, Italy, Austria and England. Handy for when they're touring and need somewhere to kip. There's a good new band from Kent called Story Books who I heard through *BBC Introducing* who I like. They have a sweeping, dramatic sound, and like fellow Kent-sters Tom Williams & The Boat, have some really good lyrics. Check out their song 'All Those Arrows' for a good example of what they do. Over in Leamington Spa, Coves have got something great going on with nice production ideas boosting their sweet, laidback tunes. It's very early days for them, and I want to hear more!

### Huw's TOP 5

**GANG COLOURS**  
'Fancy Restaurant'

**VADOINMESSICO**  
'In Spain'

**STORY BOOKS**  
'All Those Arrows'

**COVES**  
'No Ladder'

**COLIN STETSON**  
'Home'

Late at night, I've been hypnotised by the latest Colin Stetson album, 'New History Warfare Vol 2: Judges'. Now don't be scared, but there's a lot of sax on this one. He's a Canadian bass saxophonist who's collaborated with Arcade Fire and Bon Iver, and his album is a beautiful, properly deep collection of sounds I hadn't heard before. Oh, and the new album by Tennessee all-girl band Those Darlins is a lot of fun. Think short, scuzzy guitar pop tunes with a real independent spirit. Until next time!

**NEXT WEEK'S COLUMNIST:**  
Friendly Fires' Jack Savidge

## 5 TO SEE

*This week's  
unmissable new  
music shows*

### WOMAN'S HOUR (below)

Start The Bus,  
Bristol  
February 29

**STATIC JACKS**  
Zigfrid Von  
Underbelly,  
London  
February 29

**WILLIS EARL BEAL**  
Nation Of  
Shopkeepers,  
Leeds  
March 3

**WET NUNS**  
Reading Rooms,  
Dundee  
March 4

**PALE SEAS**  
The Castle,  
Manchester  
March 5



## FAIREWELL

**THE SOCIAL, LONDON** MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13

### CAUGHT LIVE

The corridor-like basement of The Social is a gallery of curious faces. They're all watching Johnny White - aka Fairewell - hunched

uneasily over a laptop as he teases threads of melody and softly pushes one note away from the next. This is the third time White has taken to the stage as Fairewell, the second headlining. Yet despite his debut album 'Poor Poor Grendel's' amorous reviews, tonight is rumoured to be the last time he will ever play live. Too stressful, he said recently. Too much bullshit for too little enjoyment.

Regardless of that, tonight the show must go on. White appears cautious early on, and wanders agitatedly the few square feet of stage. Laptop-triggered crescendos leave our host clearly, visibly anxious as he dons a guitar and bears up to the mic stand. Drummer Josh Alexander and bassist Joe Daniel join him from the crowd - and they seem more like strangers acting on impulse than bandmates. Where Fairewell on record

rumble along softly, live the band are a thunderous experience. Despite this, early difficulties ensue to almost comical effect: faulty mic leads, disobedient DVD players and fretboard-drooping scarves provide obstacle after obstacle for the band to overcome.

White's personality is emblematic of Fairewell's performance, in that when he bumbles apologetically about proceedings, the audience spur him on. When he turns away - lost in electronica - they are pulled into his world, where his shyness is offset by moments of aural magic. The top pick-up guitar solos and driving melodies of 'Honey

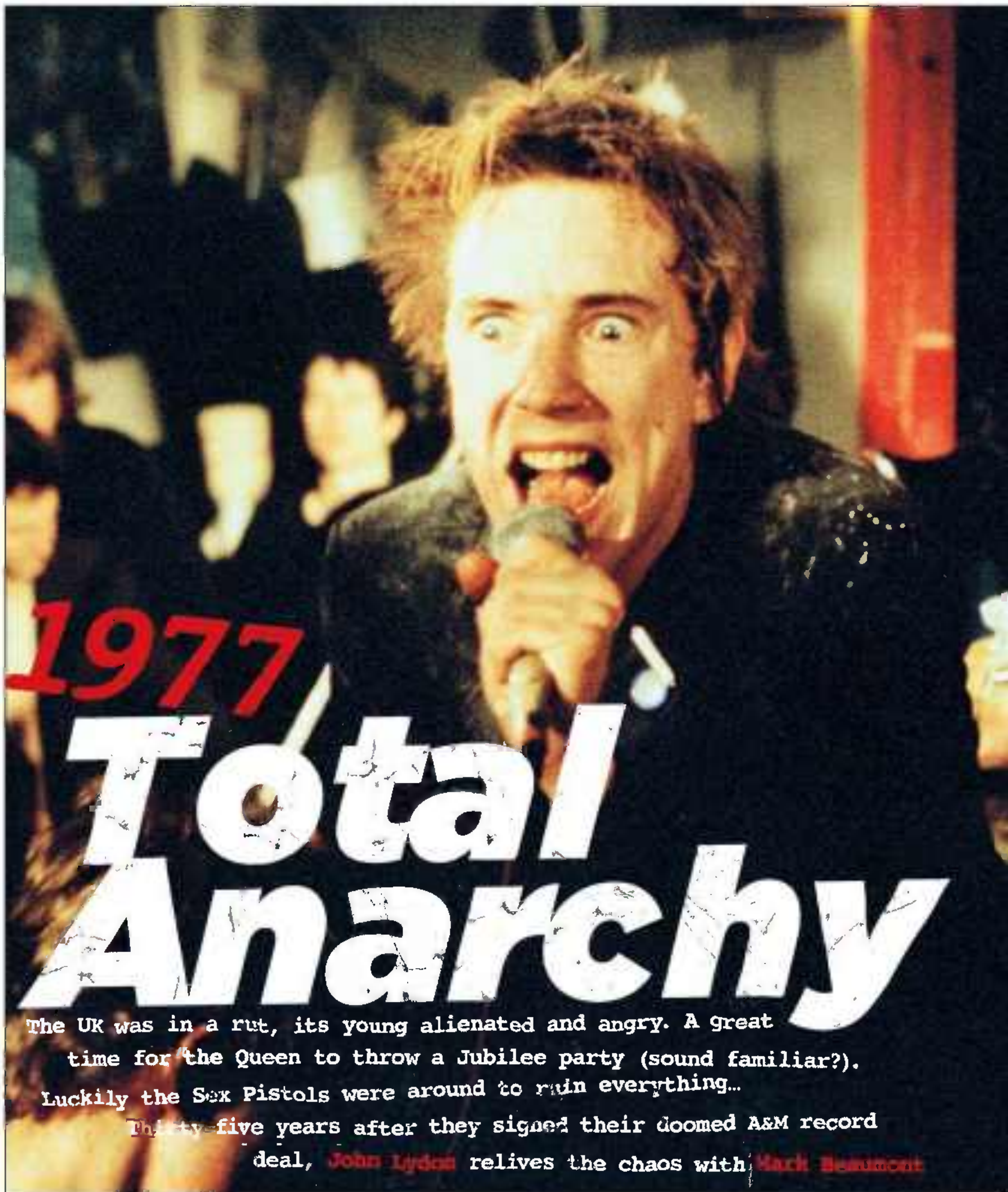
*When he turns away, lost  
in electronica, the crowd  
are pulled in his world*

Street' and 'Born Under A Bad Sign' are high watermarks, but they do lend inertia to the more electronic passages later on. At the gig's conclusion we ask White if Fairewell will ever play again. "I'll do another show, I think," he says, sounding unsure. We hope he does - perhaps Johnny White just needs people to want it enough... **Joshua Hadow**



One of the village  
People that joined  
Vadoinmessico





1977

# Total Anarchy

The UK was in a rut, its young alienated and angry. A great time for the Queen to throw a Jubilee party (sound familiar?).

Luckily the Sex Pistols were around to ruin everything...

Thirty-five years after they signed their doomed A&M record

deal, John Lydon relives the chaos with Mark Hamill





John Lydon and Sid Vicious, Ivanhoe's, Huddersfield, Christmas Day 1977 and (below) the infamous Bill Grundy chat



**A** splurge of spat-out swears on teatime telly, a national outcry, a banned tour and rumours of stomachs emptied on a flight to Amsterdam; that was all it took for EMI to drop them like a hot cruise missile. A kicked-in bog, a trashed office, a threat on the life of the director's best mate and the disdain of Rick Wakeman; that was all A&M had to hear to dump them less than a week after signing them.

Their new bassist smacked to the gills and half of England baying for their blood while the other half rallied to their cultural and social carnage, the Sex Pistols rampaged blindly towards the summer of 1977, on direct collision course with the greatest national celebration since the 1966 World Cup. They were the punk rock pariahs spewing truths about the "no future" generation and trying to gob out the patriotic flames of our monarch's glorious Silver Jubilee, a flag-flapping festival of patriotism marking the Queen's 25th year on the throne.

At a time of widespread strikes and economic depression, it was a chance for the country to rouse from misery and celebrate itself. In the face of such inevitable and extreme public disgust, it was going to take a man with the patience of a saint, the fearlessness of a Spartan and the legal resources of News International to take the Sex Pistols on.

A man, indeed, who looks remarkably like Usain Bolt with a white goatee.

"I loved Richard Branson for backing us so totally to the hilt," says John Lydon, honouring the man who got arrested, indicted and maligned to make it happen. "When he opened up the bigger Virgin stores, putting 'Never Mind The Bollocks...' posters all over the windows and then having to fight an ugly court case that was brought against us for using foul language in our promotional campaign... you're going to put me in jail for using a word that's in the *Oxford English Dictionary*? 'Bollocks'? What bollocks is that?"

The story surrounding the Sex Pistols signing with Virgin in May 1977 – arguably the most important

record deal in modern rock – is the stuff of putrid punk legend. The EMI split; the week-on-A&M farrago; the secret tours and media demonisation; the sacking of Glen Matlock and the arrival of The Vicious Monster; the Jubilee Day riot and the 'God Save The Queen' furore; the stabbings, the death threats, the filth, the fury. But looking back on it 35 years on, John and co uncover a secret history involving shady industrial dealings, entrepreneurial awards, clandestine meetings with Abba and fantasy cake fights with Her Majesty...

## THE EMI SPLIT

Within days of the Sex Pistols' legendary appearance on Thames Television's early-evening *Today* show in December 1976 – the band spewing expletives at presenter Bill Grundy – EMI were claiming to be 'investigating' them as their Anarchy In The UK tour fell apart amid tides of tabloid sensationalism.

"I was doing some ferreting of my own," says John. "EMI were connected to arms dealers and all kinds of crooked establishment shenanigans, and yet purporting

**"You're going to jail me for using a word in the dictionary?"**

**JOHN LYDON**

to be the voice of the establishment and horrified with the likes of us oiks."

"EMI was a multinational corporation that made parts of radar and nuclear guidance systems and cruise missiles," Glen Matlock argues, referencing claims in Brian Southall's book *The Rise And Fall Of EMI Records*. "As I understand it they'd also invented the MRI scanner and they had the only one in the whole world. There were people from the Bible Belt in America with millions of dollars who wanted to buy it and it all happened about the same time as we did Grundy. They had this anarchistic band and they were trying to flog their MRI scanner, so something had to give."

On January 4, 1977, the Sex Pistols took a flight to Amsterdam to play some hastily arranged gigs out of the country. Within hours the *Evening News* in London was announcing that the band had caused chaos on the flight, spitting and vomiting. "We were lovely," John attests. "That the establishment resents you bitterly allows [the press] a free hand at writing whatever they want." ►





The very next morning Glen was called down to the telephone by the proprietor of their hotel. "This guy went, 'Hi, I'm from *The Sun*, you've just been sacked from EMI Records, can I have a quote?' That's how I found out. I said, 'That's nice, isn't it?'"

## GLEN MATLOCK: OUT

Even before EMI dropped the Sex Pistols they were offering Glen, whom they saw as the main songwriter, a deal for whatever band he wanted to form. They smelled the animosity between him and John. "He was a prickly character and that was what was good about him," Glen says, "but the different factions came up and we were in a goldfish bowl."

"Glen had a rigid sensibility," argues John. "It had to have a verse and a chorus, a nice little guitar bit in the middle and then a happy ending. The Kinks crossed with

The "silly audience brawl" that soured John and Glen's relationship, at the Nashville Rooms, Kensington

**Sex by numbers...**

The '77 stats that matter

**25,000**

Number of copies of 'God Save The Queen' destroyed when the Pistols were dropped by A&M

**75,000**

Number of pounds the Sex Pistols were paid to leave A&M

**1**

Songs on 'Never Mind The Bollocks...' Sid played bass on 'Bodies'

**6**

Days the Sex Pistols remained signed to A&M for

**150,000**

Number of copies of 'God Save The Queen' sold on Virgin

**2MILLION**

Number of years, according to Johnny Rotten in 1977, since the last "honest" band, pre-Pistols was around

**"John was a prickly character, and that's what was good about him"**

**GLEN MATLOCK**

Cliff Richard. Glen still bemoans the swearing, whereas my opinion is it's human language, which is our greatest achievement as a species."

John still claims Glen refused to play 'God Save The Queen' live because he believed it to be a fascist song; Matlock still denies it. "Glen didn't want to work with me anymore," says John. "It was after some silly audience brawl in some pub in Kensington. We never came to blows, but the verbals were rampant."

At a band meeting, Glen made it clear he couldn't put a brave face on their differences. "Soon after, Malcolm rang me up," he recalls. "He said, 'We're gonna get Sid in the band'. Then Malcolm said,



'I made a mistake, I want you to come back in there and kick down the doors'. I said, 'You've left it too late', then he sent the telegram [to NME, stating that Glen had been "thrown out... because he went on too long about Paul McCartney"]. If any of them had said that to my face I would've countered it, but none of them had the bottle to."

## SID VICIOUS: IN

As Glen formed The Rich Kids with Midge Ure, his replacement was struggling to master his instrument. "In one way it was a mistake," says John of his idea to get his mate Sid Vicious in the band, "in another hilarious because we shouldn't be taking ourselves too seriously. His fears about his abilities drove him into the drug market. It became something nasty, he started to believe this image he was trying to build to try to adapt to being a Sex Pistol."

Sid's first rehearsals with the band? "Hideous," John laughs. "He was fuffing and bluffing it. Lemmy said he'd teach him. 'Sid, you can't play, you've got no talent!', he said. He had no sense of rhythm... you can't even fake it."

Sid's debut gig with the Pistols at Notre Dame Hall in London was the first of many energetic but 'unplugged' appearances. "He wouldn't even realise he wasn't plugged in," says John. "He was thinking he was sounding fantastic and his bass wasn't even on!"

## THE A&M FLASCO

March 10, 1977. A Bentley pulls up outside Buckingham Palace and four pissed-up punks fall out, swear at a gaggle of journalists, scribble on a fake contract and fall back into the car, fighting. Welcome to the invention of the anti-establishment pop publicity stunt.

"Hilarious," John recalls of the day the Sex Pistols 'signed' to A&M (the





# Anarchy in the UK?

What was occupying the nation's mind in '77 compared to now?

## Then

**FILM**  
**SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER**  
Hard-hitting disco drama with drugs, attempted rape and suicide. And suits you could ruin by just looking at a spag bol.

**PROTESTS**  
**SEX PISTOLS ON THE THAMES**  
McLaren knew how much anti-establishment kudos they'd get by blasting 'God Save The Queen' straight into the Commons bar from the river.

**NAMELESS**  
**THE PRINCESS LEIA**  
With *Star Wars* conquering the galaxy, playgrounds teemed with kids looking like they had Danish pastries glued to each ear.

**ECONOMY**  
**RECESSION**  
Strikes, power cuts, 1.5 million unemployed, bickering, hapless government forced to form Lib-Lab pact, no future.

## Now

**FILM**  
**THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN**  
Donning a rather less dashing but more stain-resistant suit than Travolta, this summer will be all about Spidey.

**PROTESTS**  
**OCCUPY LONDON**  
The global financial elite: much more evil than Royals. But as Tom Morello proved, they don't like punk riffs up their hedge fund.

**NAMELESS**  
**THE KINKY ELVIS**  
Rooney's polka-dot arse-to-head look and The Jedward left the nation cold; the greasy quiff sported by Alex Turner and Tom Kasabian is the one.

**ECONOMY**  
**DOUBLE-DIP RECESSION**  
Billions in debt, bank bailouts, bickering, hapless Coalition, Europe imploding, Adele selling millions.



Top right: the Pistols 'sign' to A&M outside Buckingham Palace; manager Malcom McLaren (left) shows off his ethos; and Sid Vicious (above) takes a literal kick at the pricks (well, their motors)

official signing happened the day before). "I was miffed with Sid at that point. He would just keep butting in at that conference with 'Fuck off!' We were all really pissed. I don't think I knew or cared which label I was signing for."

According to legend the car made its way to the offices of A&M, where Sid kicked apart a toilet while John abused staff and Steve had a bunk-up in the ladies lav. "I don't know if that was all the same day," says John. "I remember white tiles and white walls with tastefully placed potted plants and Venetian blinds. We weren't made to feel welcome and that stirred off something. A toilet bowl was kicked and broken, big deal. The list of names up against us on the label. I don't expect the like of Rick Wakeman and Steve Harley to be telling me I'm not music and they are."

Producer Chris Thomas then says the band arrived for the latest

'Never Mind The Bollocks...' sessions, plod in tow. "We were mixing 'God Save The Queen' and they rolled up in a limo plastered," he remembers. "Wessex Studio was next door to a school, they were baiting the kids. The police turned up and everyone was hiding in cupboards."

Six days later, after a fight in a club in which one of John's friends

allegedly threatened a friend of the head of A&M, the band were dropped. All copies of 'God Save The Queen' that'd been printed up to then were destroyed and they were paid a five-figure sum just to go away. "That got us in a 'Businessmen Of The Year' list in some magazine!" guffaws John. "Please take it, just go! That's the kind of unpopularity I love!"

## THE COMPLETION OF '...THE BOLLOCKS'

"Sid might have come to an early session," says Thomas of Sid's contribution to 'Never Mind The Bollocks...' "He wanted to get a reggae bass sound and put it onto 'God Save The Queen'. He was humoured into believing that it was on the record, but it's not." ▶



"No-one would tell him," says John, "but I went, 'You're rubbish, for God's sake, go home! I haven't spent a year writing these songs for some casual fart over the top of it.'"

By May Virgin had leapt to the rescue and sessions could steam on throughout the summer. Thomas, keen to make a huge rock record and faced with an inadequate bassist, experimented with multi-tracked guitars and had Steve fill in. "I'd rush in, there'd be no real rehearsal," John says. "You can feel my voice is sharp and CUTTTTING. Making sure every word is PRO-PER-LY PRO-NOUN-CE-D. I wasn't aware how that was gonna come out and if I'm gonna write a song I want the diction to be clear."

One session, on June 18, almost finished off the band for good, when the royalist morons decided to stamp out these traitorous killjoys. During a post-recording pint in the Pegasus pub in Islington, John pointed out to Chris a group of hardnuts eyeing them up. "We

**"I well know what I'd do if I met The Queen — I'd have a cake fight"**  
**JOHN LYDON**

went to the car park," he recalls. "There were about 11 guys there with three knives. They stabbed John in the wrist, I ended up with a slash down the back of my shirt about 18 inches long. They were passing the knives to each other, 'Now it's your turn.'"

"A bunch of Queen lovers decided to carve me up," says John. "One of these a-holes had a machete. I had a pair of leather jeans on, it ripped the leg down to the knee. The spike at the end of the machete had a slight curve that stuck in my kneecap. When it's a cold winter's day, I feel it. I was furious at their cowardice, that it'd take so many people armed to the teeth to knock down one poor little Mr Rotten."

## BRITANNIA RULES THE (AIR)WAVES

"That's a lie, isn't it?" John Lydon sneers at the myth that the Queen personally decreed that 'God Save The Queen' be banned from its rightful Number One spot in June 1977, in favour of Rod Stewart's 'I Don't Want To Talk About It/The First Cut Is The Deepest'. "Those poor people, they're born into a hamster cage and they have

no say on anything. In that respect the Queen and I are in agreement!"

They should get together for a chat about it. "Oh yes, but I well know what I'd do. I'd have a cake fight."

As the celebrations geared up for the Queen's Jubilee and all the long-weekend toff-toasting that entailed, the release of 'God Save The Queen' seemed, to traditional society, a real snarl of anarchy and revolution. Imagine Enter Shikari releasing a tune called 'Buckingham Slaughterhouse' in Diamond Jubilee week 2012, times a billion. Ranks closed against it. Major chains refused to stock it. No independent radio station would play it. Pressing plant workers initially refused to make it. But it sold huge numbers, the counter-culture uniting to insist their voice be heard.

Even though it was John who was receiving death threats tucked into milk bottles, it was 'society' that the authorities felt needed protection. Hence, come Jubilee weekend, when McLaren hired a boat to sail down the Thames past the Houses Of Parliament while the Sex Pistols played 'God Save The Queen', the River Rozzers were out in force.

"Because it's a Jubilee all pubs were allowed to stay open 24 hours, you could party wherever you liked," says John. "Except if you were a Sex Pistol. We were escorted by these police boats back to the dock and met with fists and truncheons. I snuck off first and one of the

Footage of the Sex Pistols' infamous boat gig to promote 'God Save The Queen': a sail-by punking of Parliament

police went, 'Which one's Johnny Rotten?' so I pointed to Richard Branson. They didn't know who they'd come down to clobber, just as long as they got someone!"

## 'NEVER MIND THE BOLLOCKS... FINALLY OUT

No venue would openly announce a gig by the Sex Pistols by autumn. They could only play incognito, booking gigs under the pseudonym The SPOTS (Sex Pistols On Tour Secretly). "Pubs up North," says John. "Starting all over again and playing to belligerent crowds. Going up in a Transit, skinflint. But great to do. [Although] I'd have to tell people to stop spitting. 'I don't know what fool's told you that's what we like, but we don't!'"

The release of 'Never Mind The Bollocks... Here's The Sex Pistols' on October 27, 1977 crystallised a cauldron of punk magma and set a blueprint of vital British rock music. Most importantly of all, it lived up to the monumental expectations placed upon it. "There was a lot of new punk bands declaring what the punk sound was," remembers John. "Stop that, we're the Pistols; we know what our sound is."

If, 35 years on, one thing shines bolder from the story of the Pistols in '77 than the brutal and brilliant music itself, it's this: that only by reflection, only by being confronted with its own ugliest underbelly,

does mainstream society show its true face. Fear, loathing, violence, oppression, hatred, stupidity, intolerance and ignorance.

Thank Christ the scum won.

## Polished '...Bollocks'

The Pistols' debut gets a 2012 buff-up

IT HAS BEEN announced this week that 'Never Mind The Bollocks...' is to be remastered for the first time, and released as a special package later this year. The rights for the album have been bought up by Universal,

and original producer Chris Thomas has been hauling out the tapes to work on - with the new version set to come out this autumn. Universal will be sorting a load of Pistols-related activity around the release.

**NME** Head to [NME.COM/artists/sex-pistols](http://NME.COM/artists/sex-pistols) for the latest reissue news







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FROM  
THE NME  
ARCHIVE

# Knives! Dancing policemen! Bad aftershave! On tour with the Sex Pistols

By August 1977, the **Sex Pistols** were banned from pretty much everywhere in the UK. In Sweden, however, things were different. **Charles Shaar Murray** joined John, Paul, Steve and Sid on the road

**T**he prosperous cyborgs at the next table in the backroom of this expensive Stockholm eating-place are sloshing down their coffee as fast as they can, with such indecent haste that one plump, middle-aged Swedette disgraces himself in the process. As they vacate the premises another troupe are ushered in, take a look at the party in the corner and usher themselves out again.

John Rotten – a discordant symphony of spiky crimson hair, grubby white tuxedo embellished with a giant paper clip on the lapel and an absolutely God-awful black tie with orange polkadots – looks at the departing Swedish posteriors with no little disdain. “It must’ve been my aftershave,” he remarks in his fake-out voice, halfway between Kenneth Williams, Sweeney Todd and Peter Cook, and returns to his beefheart fillet, which – much to his disgust – is delicious. He eats nearly all of it and that night doesn’t even throw up.

In general, Sweden has been less willing to take John Rotten at his word and identify him with the Antichrist than the good ol’ UK. They’ve stayed four nights in the same Stockholm hotel without any complaints from the management,

despite Sid Vicious taking a leak in the corridor because two girls had locked themselves in the bathroom of his chamber. When the local equivalent of Teds began harassing the Pistols’ fans as they left the gig, and indeed, followed the band and their admirers back to the hotel, the police were right there for the protection of the people.

I even saw one Swedish copper at the back of the hall at the second gig doing a restrained but joyful pogo to the lilting strains of ‘Pretty Vacant’. Can you imagine that at a British Pistols gig – in fact, can you imagine a British Pistols gig at all these days? In Britain, if the police were informed that the Sex Pistols and/or their fans were getting the shit whacked out of them somewhere, the most you could expect would be that they’d show up an hour or two later to count the bodies and bust the survivors (if any) for threatening behaviour.

At home the Sex Pistols are public enemies. In Sweden, they’re an important visiting Britpop group. So it goes...

**Z**oom in on the Happy House, a Stockholm club run under the auspices of the local university’s student union. One thing you have to say for [Pistols roadie] Rodent: it takes a lot of bottle to set up gear while

wearing a pair of those dumb bondage pants that strap together at the knees. Rodent, [roadie] Boogie and this Swede called Toby (though the band and their own crew call him Bollock-chops) have just schlepped a massive PA system, three amps, a drumkit and the rest of the paraphernalia that it takes to put on a rock show up to the second floor of this horrible structure, and Rodent’s done it all in bondage

**“Sid’s a right poxy name. I hate it but they wouldn’t stop calling me it. Rotten started it”**  
**SID VICIOUS**

pants. He does it the next night with his sleeves held together with crocodile clips. It’s a man’s life in the punk-rock business.

Sid Vicious has caused everybody a massive amount of relief by returning from London with the news that he beat his assault rap and copped a mere £125 fine for the knife. How’d you dress for court, Sid? “Oh, I wore this real corny shirt my mum got me about five

years ago and me steels. I must’ve looked a right stroppy cunt.”

Oh yeah, we haven’t really met Sid yet. He got the name “Sid” when he was named after a foul-looking albino hamster of that name that he and Rotten used to have. “I hate the name Sid, it’s a right poxy name, it’s really vile,” he says. “I stayed in for about two weeks because everyone kept calling me Sid, but they just wouldn’t stop. Rotten started it. He’s horrible like that, he’s always picking on me...”

**Rotten:** “Sid’s the philosopher of the band.”

**Vicious:** “I’m an intellectual.”

**Rotten:** “He’s also an oaf. He listens to what everyone says and thinks, ‘How can I get in on this?’”

**Vicious:** “No I don’t! I’m a highly original thinker, man, he’s just jealous because I’m really the brains of the group. I’ve written all the songs, even from the beginning when I wasn’t even in the group. They were so useless they had to come to me because they couldn’t think of anything by themselves...”

**L**ater, up in the hall, the student audience is ignoring the reggae that’s pumping out of the PA system. There are signs of movement from behind the silver curtains and then they’re on, revealed in all their scummy glory.

Rotten’s behind the mic, staring out at the audience through gunmetal pupils, mouth tight, shoulders hunched, one hand clamped around the microphone. “I’d like to apologise,” he says harshly, “for all the people who couldn’t get in. It wasn’t our fault.”





The band kicks into 'Anarchy In The UK', Jones' guitar a saw-toothed snarl teetering on the edge of feedback, Sid's bass synched firmly into Cook's walloping drums and Rotten an avenging scarecrow, an accusing outcast cawing doom and contempt like Poe's raven.

I played 'God Save The Queen' to [guitarist] Mick Ronson when he was over here a little while ago and he looked at me in amazement and said, "I don't understand why people keep telling me that they can't play! They're fucking great!". And, of course, he's right. They put down a roller coaster powerdrive for Rotten's caustic vocals to ride and it sounds totally right.

Except that there's something wrong. The monitors have completely dropped out, and Rotten can't hear himself singing, with the result that he has to shout even louder, his pitching becomes ever more erratic and his throat gets put under more and more strain.

Between numbers Rotten mercilessly harangues Boogie, who's responsible for the live sound mix,

but there's absolutely nothing Boogie can do. The monitors are completely shot, and they'll just have to be patched up before tomorrow's gig. Still, the Pistols flail on through 'I Wanna Be Me', 'I'm A Lazy Sod', 'I'm A Liar' (by far the best song so far written about a record company), 'God Save The Queen', 'Problems', 'No Feelings', 'Pretty Vacant', the encore of 'No Fun' and sundry others, and it's hard to see how anyone who digs rock'n'roll couldn't dig the Pistols; while they're onstage you couldn't conceive of anybody being better and John Rotten bestrides the rock'n'roll stage of the second half of the '70s the way David Bowie did for the first half.

**I**f the last few British rock and roll years have produced a superstar, Johnny Rotten is it. And let Fleet Street, the BBC and the rock establishment cope with that the best way they know how, because it isn't just happening, it's already happened. And if the definitive British rock band of now



**Top: Even in 1977, punk icons needed 40 winks**  
**Above: Steve, Paul, Johnny and Sid bring anarchy to Sweden**

feel that they have to go to Europe or Scandinavia or even America just to be able to play in front of people, then there's something worse than anarchy in the UK right now.

Bob Marley's 'Exodus' is pumping out of the sound system of a hideously twee rococo disco deep in

the heart of Stockholm. It's playing at least twice as loud as anything else that they've played tonight, and that's because John and Sid have commandeered the DJ's post and they've found it among his records. They've also found 'Pretty Vacant' and that comes next... even louder.







# "IT'S ALL ABOUT ME"

PHOTOS: ANDY WILLISHER

No longer just 'Alex Turner's best mate', **Miles Kane** has smashed it on his own and is ready to open the second chapter of his solo career. As he plays his last scheduled shows with Arctic Monkeys, he tells **Barry Nicolson** his plans for a "proper banging" new album

Last October, when *NME* went to cover Miles Kane's gig at the ABC in Glasgow, our Reviews Editor set us a very specific challenge. "See if you can write the entire review without once mentioning Alex Turner", we were dared, and just a few months previously she might as well have asked for it to be written in conversational Urdu. In the end, it wasn't very difficult at all. Miles Kane has achieved a lot in the last 12 months, but his biggest achievement has, without question, been the separation of his name from the suffix 'best friend of Arctic Monkeys frontman Alex Turner'.

The gig itself – like most of the dates on that tour – was sold out (demand for tickets was such that it had to be moved to a larger venue), and the audience was a diverse cross-section made up of everyone from Weller-worshipping footwear Nazis to shrill, screaming teenage girls, from the hip parent brigade at the back of the room to a veritable multitude of not-readily-categorisable others. What they all had in common, however, was their unreserved hero worship of a man who had once looked forever cursed to play Robin to his best mate's Batman. By the end of the night it was obvious to us that, on the fourth debut album of his career, Miles Kane had finally arrived.

He has 'Colour Of The Trap' – the record that "turned everyone's head and changed what they thought about me" – to thank for that. Miles' solo debut became one of 2011's most heartening success stories, selling over 60,000 copies and spawning a glut of triumphant festival appearances – which is a glut of triumphant festival appearances and about 59 odd thousand copies more than The Rascals or The Little Flames ever managed.

We meet Miles in the lobby of an upscale hotel on a bitterly cold Parisian afternoon. Dressed in a sharply cut navy blazer and arse-hugging drainpipe trousers, but for his nasal Wirralian accent he could almost pass for a '60s Gallic pop star. The success of 'Colour Of The Trap' is, he admits, "what I've wanted for years. I know that a lot of people thought of me as just being Al's mate, and on this record – first with the tunes, then the gigs that came afterwards – I've proved them wrong. All of us – Al and our gang, and the

people who are around us – have known the score for years now, but a lot of people didn't. So it's kind of come full circle for me now. And it feels great."

Miles is in Paris today on a familiar assignment: another high-profile support slot with – you guessed it – Arctic Monkeys. These kind of gigs have served him well – he's also seemingly endlessly supported Beady Eye and Kasabian in the last year – but, he says, "they don't really feel like support gigs anymore. It feels a bit special, like people are there to have it to us as well."

These will be his last dates with the Monkeys for the foreseeable future: he plans to enter the studio this month to record a second album, before hitting the road for his own headline tour in April. As he puts it, "I just want to carry on and move forward. I don't want to go away and spend a year making a record. I want to do it now."

We'll get to all that in good time. First, however, it's

worth going over just how Miles Kane got to this point. His decision to call time on The Rascals in 2009 and go it alone was, he says, "a sink-or-swim moment, if I'm honest about it. But it had come to the point where it just wasn't gonna happen. There were some great gigs, some great moments, some good songs, but you could tell from the last few gigs that it wasn't there anymore. We really thought that that band would happen, but it just didn't. So I decided to start over. And if this hadn't happened, then I would've gone and done something else again, because you know that you want it, and you won't rest until you've got it."

He swam rather than sank, obviously. But it was by no means a sure thing. The release of *The Last Shadow* ►

**"I WANT TO SWAGGER ABOUT THE STAGE. I NEED TO BE THE MAN"**

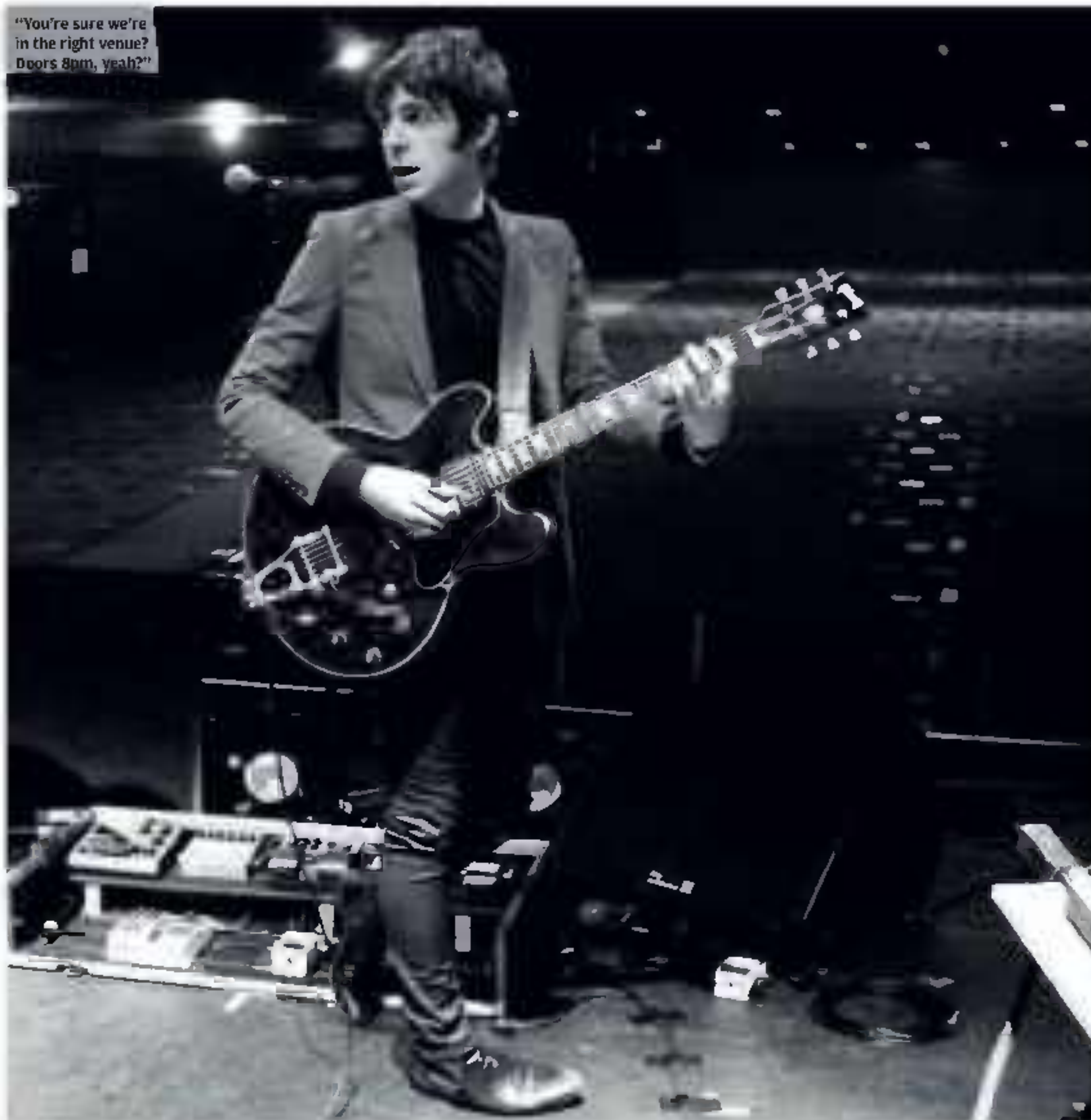
*Miles Kane*

Kane and most certainly able





"You're sure we're in the right venue? Doors 8pm, yeah?"



## "I'M LISTENING TO OUTKAST"

*The latest on Miles' second album*

"I DON'T WANT TO GIVE too much away," says Miles when we press him on the plan for his second album, before promptly giving too much away anyway. In addition to 'The First Of My Kind', he says, "'Woman's Touch' might end up being the second single. That's a bit more pop, a bit like 'Shout To The Top' by The Style Council, but a bit heavier. There's another one I'm really into at the moment called 'Ticking Time Bomb', although I might change the title. And 'The Competition' still needs a bit of work, but it's gonna be a stomper when it's done."

Musically, he doesn't plan to stray too far from the sound of 'Colour Of The Trap', but has been immersing himself in Janelle Monáe and OutKast, "to try and open myself to new sorts of lyrics". He's scheduled to enter the studio this month, and while he hasn't yet locked down a producer, "I'm having a meeting with a guy who's done some Weller records in the past. But it's pretty loose, really. What I learned on 'Colour Of The Trap' is just to make sure the songs are solid. If we do that, hopefully it should be quite an easy record."

And as for his dream collaborator? "I'd love to do a duet with that bird Janelle Monáe, I'd love to make a great two-and-a-half minute pop song with her. I haven't put the feelers out, but I could see us working well together."

Puppets' album put Miles in the peculiar position of being more famous for his side project than his day-job. In need of an identity of his own, he found one in the bespoke, sophisticated '60s guitar-pop of 'Colour Of The Trap'. "Everything about it is just me," he says when we ask him to assess why that album succeeded where previous ventures had failed. "I don't think there's any confusion about what it is. It sounds over the top, but as a lad, I feel like I've found myself, I've found my feet... I've found who I am, in a way. It's like, everyone has their own little path, you know? I've found mine now, and I just wanna go down it."

Still, we can't help but wonder about the other path he could've gone down...

**NME:** The Monkeys once said that they'd have been happy for you to join the band if you'd only asked them. Did you ever consider it?

**Miles:** "No. The thing for me is, I want to swagger about the stage and sing. I'm a frontman, d'you know what I mean?"

I love the Monkeys and they're my best mates, but they've already got their frontman. I couldn't join a band and just be a the guitarist again. I need to be the man."

**Does the success of 'Colour Of The Trap' make it easier for you to go back to The Last Shadow Puppets? You could argue you've got nothing to prove anymore...**

"Hmmm, yeah, but I still want to do a second record of my own. That's all I can think about at the moment. And when the day comes around to do another Shadow Puppets album,

which it will, it'll be great, but for now, for both of us, we're just enjoying what we're doing. I don't really want to stop this ball rolling by going back and doing the Shadow Puppets yet."

**Do you get pissed off by people constantly asking you about it?**

"No, not at all. It is what it is, and I'm always gonna get asked about it. I mean, it's there, and people are always gonna ask about it, so you might as well just accept it. There's no point in being pissed off about that. The Shadow

**"PEOPLE THOUGHT OF ME AS ALEX'S MATE. I'VE PROVED THEM WRONG"**

*Miles Kane*

Kane and his band and (above) with some bloke

wings with a tambourine. Soon, Miles slings an acoustic guitar over his shoulder and the duo are huddled around a mic stand, harmonising on Shadow Puppets song 'Standing Next To Me'. At the song's end, Alex turns to Miles and propositions him: "Your place or mine, then?" There's no-one except us and the road crew there to see it, but it feels like a special moment nonetheless.

Later on, before he takes the stage, NME finds Miles in his dressing room with his band, smoothing the sleeves of his vintage tattered burgundy two-piece (Miles Kane loves clothes) and carefully applying eyeliner in the mirror (Miles Kane loves mirrors) while Jimi Hendrix blares from a nearby iPod dock. The big news from tonight's gig will be the brief Shadow Puppets reunion that was worked out in soundcheck a few





Monkey on his back: Myles and Alex

hours earlier, but equally as significant is the new song Myles slips into his set. 'The First Of My Kind' was recorded just a couple of weeks ago, and will be released to coincide with his UK headline tour in April. It is very him: all debonair, Bond theme grandeur and spiky, propulsive choruses. He's justifiably "buzzing" about it, and the second album in general.

"I know exactly what I want from it," he boasts. "I want ro songs, all of them banging. The blueprint is for it to be upbeat. I want every song to be

grooving, a proper banger, in the vein of 'Come Closer' or 'Inhaler', so that live we'll just be fucking having it..."

How far along are you with it? "Well, we did this single, which is one of the strongest we've ever done. There's another song called 'Woman's Touch' that we were originally gonna release, but it just felt right to swap them around at the last minute. But there's loads of songs, loads of ideas, that are already there. After this tour I'll have a couple of weeks of bringing it all together, doing demos, and then

hopefully get into the studio in March, and get it on its way for summer."

Right now, however, he has an even more pressing engagement: with his mum. Ma Kane – along with what seems like an infantry division of the Monkeys' relatives – is in attendance tonight. After Myles guests with the Arctics on 'Little Illusion Machine' and set-closer '305', the party moves to their dressing-room. Over the shoulder of a burly security guard we spy a jovial Myles with his mum on one knee, his girlfriend on the other, and a generous

measure of Irish whiskey in his hand.

He comes out to say his goodbyes, looking uncharacteristically dishevelled in smudged eyeliner and a sweat-drenched collarless shirt, and we tell him that we'll see him again when he heads out on tour in April. As we're leaving, we're reminded of something he told us yesterday: "You're only as good as your last album." It's a hoary old cliché, of course, but Myles Kane knows the truth of it better than anyone. And right now, it seems, he's pretty damn good indeed.



A close-up portrait of the rapper Wretch 32. He is a Black man with short, dark hair, looking slightly to the left of the camera with a serious expression. He has a small, dark tattoo on his left cheek. He is wearing a dark, textured jacket over a grey shirt and a thick black chain necklace. The background is plain white.

**“I  
attack  
it like  
a rock  
star”**

**“It’s  
not my  
job to be  
political”**

**“Jealousy  
breeds  
around  
me”**

*What’s on*  
**WRETCH**  
**32’s**  
*mind?*



Politics? He's saying nothing. Fame? Dizzee better watch his back. And the new tunes? "I'm a fan of mad transitional journeys." **Louis Pattison** meets **Wretch 32**, hip-hop's new renaissance man

PHOTO: ANDY FALLON

**O**ut of London's South Bermondsey station and past Millwall football ground, there's an industrial estate tucked round the backside of the old gasworks. Not somewhere you might expect to find a Number One artist.

Squeezing past the kids smoking pungent spliff on the step, through a tangle of corridors, we arrive at a studio. Here, amid a couple of sofas and a clutter of guitars and synths – plus a couple of drained bottles of Jack Daniel's and Courvoisier – we find Wretch 32 toiling on his third, as-yet-untitled album.

This time last year Wretch – aka Jermaine Scott – was one of the most hyped new acts in Britain. Now, with a Top Five album, 'Black And White', and a Number One single 'Don't Go' under his belt, it's on a whole new level. "I was tipped, but that doesn't mean anything," says Wretch. "The expectation is higher now."

We're here to check out a couple of works in progress, 'Blur' and 'Birthday Suit'. Both boast an oddly catchy pile-up of gnarly guitars and pugilistic beats, shunning the glossy trance-grime template that Tinie and Tinchy rode up the charts. Most surprising is 'Blur'. If Wretch sampling 'Fools Gold' irked indie snobs, this'll have them gibbering. Part uplifting Coldplay-ish guitars, part steamroller drum'n'bass, it finds Wretch namechecking Blur, Stone Roses, Oasis, The Verve and, um, Limp Bizkit. It could be read as a craven bid to 'go indie'. But Wretch explains it as his attempt to transmit the buzz of a music festival. "I had so much fun at the festivals last year," he beams. "Having the band set-up, with drums, electric guitars, I felt like a rock star."

Later, he says, one of his producers, Panther, played him the beat to 'Blur'. "And it put me back on this rock star vibe... as I was writing the verses, I was jumping around like I was onstage."

**H**e might threaten to "ride this motherfucking beat like a tractor", but the young Jermaine Scott hasn't always been acquainted with green fields. "As a kid, I didn't even know these things existed," he admits. "There was an advert on TV where a boy goes 'Glastonbury, you would have loved it'. But I didn't even know what Glastonbury was." His epiphany came a couple of years back, when he played Radio 1's Big Weekend in Swindon – "I went around like a big kid" – and now, at 26, he exudes the enthusiasm of a child who just wants to get his face painted, dive in the mud, and go skin up in the stone circle.

Still, for a rapper more used to scoring rewinds at grime raves, the protocol of a festival set proved bewildering. "I was on early at Glastonbury," he recalls. "I looked out beneath the curtain and I was like, 'Jesus, I'm on in five minutes, and there are 17 people out there.' But you come out, rock them, and by the end the tent is full. If I'd have been afraid, it wouldn't have worked. You've got to attack it like a rock star."

This is all far removed from the Wretch 32 we met circa 'Black And White'. The son of a reggae DJ who was embroiled in the Broadwater Farm riots of 1985, he spoke of police raids and of watching a friend get knifed, left holding "his intestines in his hands". Since then, Tottenham has blown up once again.

**NME: You've said there's stuff about the riots on the new record. Were you in Tottenham as it kicked off?**

**Wretch:** "I was in Ireland, so like everyone else I was watching it on the TV. But I was like, that's the shop I shop in! It's definitely something that affected me, and everyone kinda wanted me to speak on it, but that isn't really my role in life. I'm a musician. I don't know much about political stuff."

**Well, some of it is political, but some of it isn't – this is stuff happening in your community, and that's stuff you do tackle in your lyrics.**

"Sure. A million per cent."

**How is all this going to come across on the album?**

"One track, 'Could Have Been Worse', is about looking at every situation, thinking what could have happened."

"Driving down memory lane, I could have reversed/Could have had another child, it could have

been hers". It's like, it always could have been worse. It pays to look at things from a different perspective." **David Lammy, Tottenham's MP, said the riots happened because parents aren't allowed to smack their kids anymore.**

"(Laughs) I didn't see that. He said something else, though – it was great that musicians and footballers were making it in the community, but it was time they put their money where their mouth was. What does that mean? I dunno. Next time I see him, I'll ask him." **You've said you wouldn't move away...**

"I understand why people do it. You grow up somewhere and it's hard, it's harsh. You better yourself and it breeds jealousy around you. But I think it's good to stay. It benefits the community. When the riots were kicking off, just before or just after, we went to Number

One with 'Don't Go'. I think it's very important to be a role model.

To put our money where our mouth is, as David Lammy says."

**Do you feel like a role model? How do you live up to that kind of expectation?**

"It's difficult. We're just human, we make mistakes. You live your whole life on censor – I'm anticipating what could happen if I do this, or that. People don't want their kids going to the concert of a rapper who does bad things. Even on my Twitter, I'm quite sensitive. I'm like, 'Can I write that, is that politically correct?' This one time I said something about a fox. I really don't like foxes. I got a few tweets. Some people really like foxes, man."

**H**e's playing it safe – he doesn't want to be too overtly political. Can you blame him? Wretch is hoping to take the Dizzee Rascal route to success. 'Boy In Da Corner' might have scooped the Mercury, but Dizzee only started shifting serious units when he perfected his festival-slaying live set.

Received wisdom has it that British rappers need to play to the mainstream to achieve real commercial success, and if Wretch gets himself pigeonholed as some sort of spokesperson for disaffected urban youth, well, that's only going to harm his future chances of getting booked for the main stages at massive festivals. But that's a shame. Chuck D once called hip-hop "the CNN of the ghetto". In a UK that currently feels more divided than ever, Wretch is uniquely placed – and uniquely skilled – to tell a story. May he realise his dream of becoming a rock star. Just so long as he doesn't lose a bit of himself along the way.

*For a new video interview with Wretch discussing his next album, head to [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video)*

## Wretch's NEW TUNES exposed

*More on the  
rocked-up newbies  
due later this year*

### BLUR

Wretch's bid to take the festival season by storm. A fiery pile-up of widdly guitars and piledriving, Pendulum-style drum'n'bass, 'Blur' finds Wretch boasting "I've survived moshpits/With my flying dropkicks" and boasts a chorus namechecking the great and good of UK indie ("Throwing Stone Roses/Sipping my Oasis"). It all comes apart in an explosion of digital lurches and the sound of breaking glass.

### BIRTHDAY SUIT

Musically, it's an even more challenging listen than 'Blur', evolving from gloomy horrorcore to wall-shaking dubstep to hardcore rave. "I'm always a fan of having mad transitional journeys in music," he explains. "I want to meld all these genres in one song, so we've got some mad bass bits, some jungle-slash-breakbeat bits, and then the end bit, which is like rock-meets-bashment."



**T**hat is quite some shirt bassist Rob Lee is wearing. A vertical foot's worth of tassles up each arm. With pictures of cactuses and coyotes howling at the moon. Rob grins the grin of a man about to take to the stage dressed like a plank who likes to take to the

stage dressed like a plank, while his bandmates take turns rinsing him about it. First James Brown, lanky, fast-talking guitarist, then Tom Hudson, the lesser-bearded singer-guitarist, then Lee Vincent, the greater-bearded, tattooed drummer. Rob dons a beanie. People start singing Creed's 'Arms Wide Open' to him.

This morning, Pulled Apart By Horses were collected from their Leeds homes in their rented splitter van. First stop: Glasgow, King Tut's. Whereas a couple of years ago, they recall playing the U-bend of the toilet circuit in the city to "four men, three of whom didn't look very happy", now they've sold the place out. It's two weeks since their second record, 'Tough Love', hit the streets, and after peddling the first around the country so hard it nearly killed them, this is the first chance Britain will have to take a look at a sharper, more sinewy second incarnation.

"I've always thought The Edge should be pronounced 'theedge'," philosophises Tom, still working the beanie topic, but now flying off at the sort of right angles their conversations seem to work best at. They spin through their favourite cookery shows, then the conversation moves onto children's TV themes, which becomes the spur for Lee to tell us that they uploaded loads of copies of their new album onto torrent sites: "It's each song as it was recorded for the first 10 seconds... then it turns into the *Grange Hill* theme. The funniest thing is, we've had complaints from people. Best of all, one guy was like: 'Yeah, and then it turned into the theme from *Byker Grove*'. I mean, what an idiot!"

They are living proof that the band that gags together stays together. There is seldom more than a three-minute stint where they're not taking the piss out of something or someone. Onstage, they banter their way through another round of Rob's shirt. James finds a pole behind the rafters, and uses it to pull himself up 'til he is tilted fully upside-down, and does a series of manoeuvres involving raising his bum onto the rafters, like the opposite of chin-ups: bum-ups. The stage-diving is constant: still clutching guitars they spin and whirr above everyone's heads like flies recently sprayed with Mosi-Guard repellent.

Later, crew and band all toast their success in the bottle of Glenlivet they were presented with for selling the place out, then emerge from a far-flung back door to find groups of teen fans 'casually' walking along the otherwise desolate road, 'coincidentally' 'bumping into' them. By midnight, the party moves uptown to Nice & Sleazy. "The home of the £2.50 white Russian," James explains. "We wouldn't take you to some scuzzy rocker bar: we're basically the posh Trash Talk." At around 5am, the final stragglers gutter their way home under the motorway overpass, back to the Travelodge, to fall finally asleep to the gentle travellers' heartbeat of BBC News 24.

**A**t midday, keys deposited in the check-out box, everyone rallies to the meeting point before swinging into a splitter van with the obligatory half-read copy of Michael Azerrad's cult classic documenting hardcore bands on the road, *Our Band Could Be Your Life*, lying on the table. Four hours and a snatch of prank photographs of a sleeping James and Lee later, Aberdeen's slate-grey skyline grinds into view. For reasons unexplained, Rob suddenly starts singing that classic Shed Seven hit/phone shop jingle: "at The Link it's easy".

Down at the Tunnels, James takes delivery of a package – a series of cupcakes, stamped 'James Brown', which his fiancée has sent him for Valentine's Day. For

# HORSE

They might dick around 24/7, but as they tear through the UK with their ear-ripping new album, **Gavin Haynes** finds that **Pulled Apart By Horses** have become a rock force to be taken very, very seriously





# POWER



Hoofing around:  
(l-r) James Brown,  
Lee Vincent, Tom  
Hudson, Rob Lee



reasons that never quite become clear, Rob will spend part of tonight's show gripping a red rose between his teeth, but then that is the nature of their beast. PULLED APART BY HORSES have wilfully made themselves a bit of a joke. That name. Those song titles: 'I Punched A Lion In The Throat', 'Bromance Ain't Dead', 'The Crapsons', 'I - MC Hammer', to name a few.

"That's actually one of the main influences," James explains down in their storage cupboard dressing room. "Our shared sense of humour." You're not worried about being typecast? "Well, we take the music seriously, but we never take ourselves very seriously."

Lee: "That's what makes most hardcore so shit – it's got no sense of humour. It's all this passion, but then it just sits there. Take a band like TOOL – it's not obvious, but there's a big thread of humour that runs through it."

Rob: "Yeah, get that in fucking NME – PULLED APART BY HORSES SAY: 'TOOL HAVE A GREAT SENSE OF HUMOUR'."

Still, 'Tough Love' revealed a band no longer content to be court jesters to the hardcore community. In fact, it revealed a band perhaps a little weary of being lumped in with the hardcore community altogether: a complex, many-tendrilled, much-sharpened beast that sat closer to QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE than GALLOWS, and had proper evidence of its creators being fully fledged

**"WE TAKE MUSIC SERIOUSLY, NOT OURSELVES"**  
**JAMES BROWN**

human beings with thoughts and feelings and stuff.

Whereas the first, self-titled album had been a rangy set pulled together over time – its original incarnation being a setlist for a planned gig at their Leeds local The Packhorse – for 'Tough Love', they had the luxury of sitting down as a unit and working out what they wanted to do. Plus the added luxury of being coached by producer Gil Norton, he of Foo Fighters, Pixies and Jimmy Eat World production credits, who came down to Leeds for a boozy fortnight to help them rehearse.

The results screech for themselves: a knockabout hardcore racket with often amusing lyrics, but also a more refined one. It wasn't long before they were crawling up to the Radio 1 B-list. "VENOM" got played a lot," says Lee, "but it was around the time of the daytime takeover. Zane Lowe played us at 7.30 in the morning."

Tom: "People always ask you: is it bizarre that one of the heaviest songs on the album has been played on the radio? Well, 20 years ago, radio was full of rock music. To us, it's strange for it not to be."

"We confuse people," Rob continues. "Sometimes people get mad at you for not being hardcore enough, and you have to go to them: 'Well, we're not hardcore'. ►



Choose your own pun: the mane event, trot shots, stage canter...

# "RAMSAY TURNS PEOPLE TO RUBBLE!"

*James's top five cookery shows*

## 1. RAMSAY'S KITCHEN NIGHTMARES

"If you like adults breaking down over microwave chicken and Ramsay turning people into human rubble, look no further."

## 2. FOOD AND DRINK

"Golden oldie here. Chris Kelly loved to cook, but he liked the taste of wine even more. In fact he was a broiling drunk who made Keith Floyd look amateur."

## 3. READY STEADY COOK

"Ainsley: 'What ingredients have you brought today?'. Contestant: 'A bag of sand, four candles, a noose and a pack of easy-cook rice.'"

## 4. THE F WORD

"The first time TV saw Gordon as the dictionary of swears he really is. Another opportunity to see him reduce people to gibbering wrecks."

## 5. ANYTHING WITH NIGELLA LAWSON

"Let's face it, she could be showing you how to cook porridge out of old grandad's potty, using his pipe to mix in his piss, and you'd still be delighted."

Scotland gets pulled apart a new one

Some people were like: 'Ooh, hang on, these guys look like an indie band, but their music is way more heavy.' Yet somewhere between these poles, the four carve out a space all of their own that makes pleasantly confusing sense to all the tribes: a sharp, unforced, non dicky British reinvention of heavy rock's tropes one skewed show at a time.

Tonight is a case in point. James mounts a monitor and theatrically points his arse towards his audience. Tom runs full pelt into the crowd. Rob plays stood above the drum rider. At Reading and Leeds for the fourth time last year, the security were

forewarned about them: "You're that monkey man," one stage manager growled at James. "Always climbing on things, aren't ya? Well, I've got my eye on you."

They're not a band who wear their ambition on their sleeve, but that same nerve joy is taking them places: when they were bottom of the support bill for Muse at the LCC, despite dire warnings not to, within a few songs they were dashing down Matt Bellamy's stage ramp. Imagine what they'd get up to if they ever got one of their own.

An hour and a quarter inside their riff tumble-dryer and they're marching back out through the side door, Lee still gripping his asthma inhaler between his

teeth. A few signings over, they're loading up the splitter and splitting up the last of the rider for a road-party to Newcastle. This band could be your life. If your life was wildly amusing, deeply misunderstood and, of course, based around a very deep love of cookery TV shows.

Stream the new album 'Tough Love' at [NME.COM/artists/pulled-apart-by-horses](http://NME.COM/artists/pulled-apart-by-horses) now





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# YOU'RE FIRED!

*James Mercer is the ruthless task-master of **The Shins**. But is sacking your mates the healthiest start to making a new album? **Jazz Monroe** puts the crucial questions to the man himself*







James Mercer sounds like he's about to cry. "Maybe that's why people get this impression of me," he fumbles. "That I come across... *businessy*." Down the transatlantic phone line, The Shins leader is reeling from a suggestion we heard from the band's former keyboardist Marty Crandall: that he's ruthless. The claim is not unfounded. It isn't every day a disgruntled drummer (namely curly topped ex-Shin Jesse Sandoval), dramatically departs a Billboard Chart-conquering indie band and has to open up a food cart to pay his rent, then dubs in his old best-mate/boss to the local paper, as happened in 2009.

"Sometimes people have a very romantic view of music," James continues. "And for good reason – it *is* romantic. But..." He trails off, grappling with the words trying to exit his mouth. "The reality is, to get things done, you've got to do them. And that takes work and cerebral thought – not just going with your gut."

That 'nice guy' doublespeak about a fact that James' friends and fans have been scrambling desperately to avoid: that James, having driven The Shins' accelerating success story – three lauded albums including the last, 2007's 'Wincing The Night Away', a Number Two US smash and Top 20 here – sacked Jesse and Marty after 17 years together because the benefits of doing so outweighed their friendship. Is that... *right*?

It's a difficult question; answers vary wildly depending on who you speak to. Unsurprisingly it's current members who wax lyrical. Colleagues for new album 'Port Of Morrow', out this month, bat off whispers of James's dictatorial attitude. "I was a bit weirded out when he

## "I HAVE CONTROL. THE DECISIONS ARE MINE"

*James Mercer*

made me wear a dunce cap for not getting my guitar solo on the first take," new live addition Jessica Dobson jests.

But others paint a different picture, not only of the man, but of the notion that his decision to smash the line-up was made purely in pursuit of stylistic evolution. Former Shins A&R Stuart Meyer, while "not surprised" by Jesse and Marty's fates, admits he's "baffled" by the decision to ditch kingmaker label Sub Pop for Sony – via James' imprint, Aural Apothecary. Jesse's 2009 interview with the *Portland Mercury*, too, was critical, with him saying James sacked him over the phone because he needed drum lessons – a claim James denies.

Modest Mouse mainman Isaac Brock knows James inside out. The pair met in California in 1995, when Modest Mouse and pre-Shins project Flake Music (the classic line-up plus long since departed hot air balloon-enthusiast Neal Langford) shared a bill on their first ever tour. But, after meeting at college in Albuquerque and four years of boozy rock shows – "the guy's got some pipes!", says Isaac – the crack formed when James demoed "the songs no-one else likes", under the name The Shins.

Having remained friends and occasional collaborators throughout, Isaac, like James, is now his own band's sole survivor. What's his view on outright sackings? "There have been probably 20 different people in Modest Mouse," he laughs. "I've gotta tend the shop: if someone in my band partied too much and they were starting to affect progress, I'd have to let them go."

People have been hard on James. He felt the other people weren't taking the work ethic of The Shins seriously. He made a good decision." ►



**T**en days earlier, we're sat in a lush room of London's May Fair Hotel with a chirpy figure in smart black shirt and jeans grinning across the table. James seems honest if defensive, and he's more animated than we expected, waving his arms excitedly as he bigs up Marty Crandall's "really cool" post-Shins outfit, *Sad Baby Wolf*. But there are nerves: he speaks with painstaking precision, his tangled, fidgeting hands make him seem like an older Michael Cera. Even so, the feeling is one of subtle confidence: leader, friendly dictator, control freak – whatever. The point is, James is The Shins.

"It's pretty easy for shit to get shoved aside unless you can assert yourself" he notes, thwacking a fly dead on his neck. "It's frustrating: while you're having these conversations about the chorus, everybody else is stating their opinions like they're real clever about it. And suddenly there's almost like..." he ponders a moment, before spitting it out like a mouthful of sour milk: "Democracy. At the end of the day, you're to blame if it's not cool. So I have final creative control. I need help – but the decisions are mine. If it sucks, it's my fault."

**NME:** You said you switched the band around to try new styles, but we've heard that the guys were drinking late, missing rehearsals...

**James:** "There was frustration there. I blamed myself it seemed to me like there was a lot of benefit [to continuing with The Shins] – but sometimes I was unable to communicate or inspire that interest. But there was a draw to working with people like Richard Swift, who's more productive than me. It's a pull more than a push."

**Marty told us he doubted Jesse "had any intention of speaking with you again, or forgiving you". When did you last speak to Jesse?**

"We've texted in the last six months. Even friends of his that were close to him haven't spoken to him."

**Marty also said: "We were friends before The Shins blew up. But once success caught up it became a business for James." He started to say he'd forgiven you, before correcting himself. Is there anything to be forgiven for?**

"(Sighs) Not communicating all along. I've been told I communicate too much sometimes. In the past I was much worse at getting people around me on the same page, letting people know what I was feeling and thinking, for the fear it would be disappointing to them. That they were hoping for something from me that they weren't getting. That's been a sort of theme in my life."

**Some think you take a dictatorial attitude to The Shins. But someone like LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy...**

"...yeah, he's even more in control of everything! It's possible that he chose people because they had a good work ethic – he probably didn't just go with his roommates..."

**Was carrying your friends from**

**Flake Music into The Shins a mistake?**

"No, but... [keeping the band going] was stressful for a long time. It does become the livelihood of these people around you – something more than simply an art project. Can I just say something? Marty does work hard. He does. But whatever I was doing, and however it was working between us, that inspiration wasn't happening. I think he'd agree with that."

**I** mean... I would've done *anything* [to do it]," says Brian Burton, alias Danger Mouse and the other half of Broken Bells alongside James. We've asked whether he'd have considered producing The Shins' new record. "Anything that comes around with James, I stop anything I'm doing to work with him. He reminded me why I started making music."



The 'classic' lineup (l-r): James Mercer, Marty Crandall, Dave Hernandez, Jesse Sandoval

It was the Broken Bells that inspired James to reboot The Shins – albeit with new parts. After management suggested jumping from Sub Pop.

James and Modest Mouse/Shins drummer Joe Plummer set to work on 'Port Of Morrow'. Recorded at a "gentlemanly schedule" in the frontman's self-converted West Coast 'studio' – an 1889 urban barn with a hayloft – the record was scrubbed up in LA by producers Rich Costey and Greg Kurstin. It has a sheen that would've seemed too glitzy back when a musical

cameo in Zach Braff's whimsical 2004 dram-com *Garden State* shot the band to indie royalty status.

It's hard not to feel sorry for Jesse and Marty as they watch the polished ship set sail. "We

worked as a team to get there," sighs Marty. "I'm gonna miss the life – the tourbus! To have that taken away, that's my only complaint." But to paint James as a money-grabbing flake would miss the mark. "The whole idea of The Shins is that it's me," he concludes. "It evolved into a band, that's why I called it The Shins: for others to feel like they belonged. I thought that would inspire devotion. Give them a work ethic."

You might cringe at that joyless phrase. But while we wonder about the cost of his success, James' only crime has been putting the music first. That much, at least, we can forgive him.

Watch The Shins' video for B-side 'September' on [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video)



## "THESE TACOS WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE!"

*Jesse's job switch and a few more odd musician career changes*

### SHINS JESSE SANDOVAL

After a decade of playing in the garage, Sandoval decided to make a career out of it.



How to recover from being kicked out of The Shins? By

selling greasy Mexican grub to Portland hipsters, of course. "I'd always wanted to do my food cart," Jesse insists. "These tacos will change your life."

### NO DOUBT ERIC STEFANI

After a decade of playing in the garage, Sandoval decided to make a career out of it.



Shortly after recording No Doubt's album 'Tragic Kingdom',

Gwen Stefani's big bro abandoned stardom for Springfield to become a 'layout artist'.

### MY BLOODY VALENTINE DEBBIE GOOGE

After a decade of playing in the garage, Sandoval decided to make a career out of it.



As MBV dallied over the follow-up their 1991 masterpiece

'Loveless', fed-up bassist Debs was earning a wage in London's Soho "driving really sweet gay boys around E'd off their heads".

### PIXIES DAVID LOVERING

After a decade of playing in the garage, Sandoval decided to make a career out of it.



When Pixies split in 1993, drummer Dave went to a 'magic conference'

in L.A. Inspired, he soon debuted an act as The Scientific Phenomenalist at a magicians' nightclub.

## "I THOUGHT I WOULD INSPIRE DEVOTION"

*James Mercer*

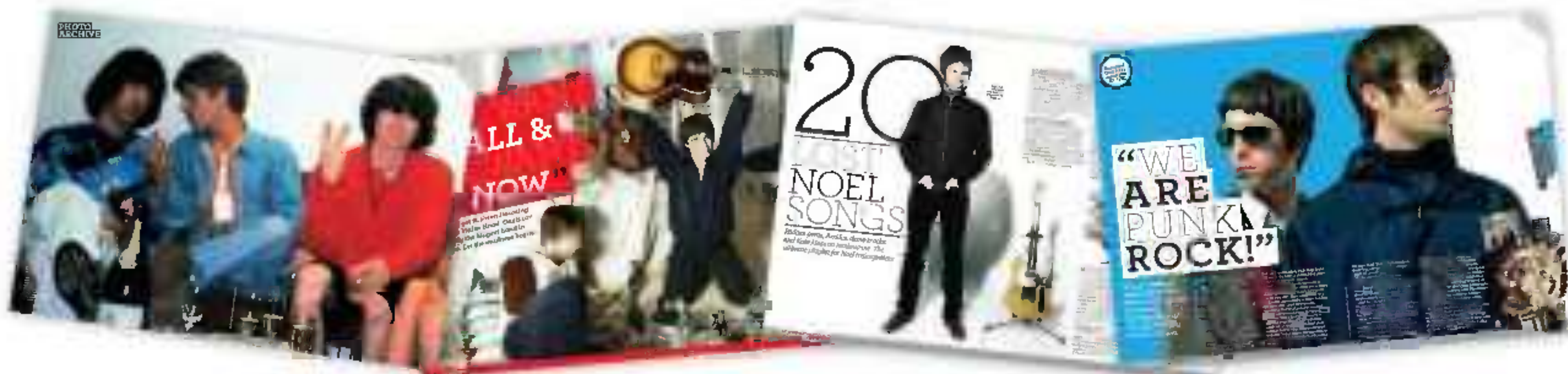


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# REVIEWS

THE BIG OPINIONS ON THIS WEEK'S IMPORTANT RELEASES

Edited by Louis Pattison



## DRY THE RIVER

**SHALLOW BED** RCA

*They're going with the flow rather than carving their own channel, but these guys sure know how to craft a grandiose indie heart-sweeper*



**I**magine trying to dry a river. With a sponge, say. It'd be frantic, furious and frustrating work, culminating in a moment of triumph when, after years of life-threatening effort against insurmountable odds, you squeegee the final drops of the Rhine into a bucket and tip it down the sink. Now imagine what a band called Dry The River should sound like. Like Fucked Up beating Wet Wet Wet to death with a blood-drenched mop. Right?

Not east London's Sound Of 2012 heroes Dry The River. They sound a bit like a tamed Wild Beasts. A less witty and adventurous Stornoway. A bit Elbow, a bit The National, a bit Doves.

And a bit, y'know, *Mumford*. They lay claim to a wide array of leftfield, credible and obscurist influences – Neutral Milk Hotel, At The Drive-In, Devendra Banhart, Leonard Cohen – but it's just a diversionary tactic to avoid the inevitable labelling as a catch-all homogenisation of all the current Big Music bands with no discernible character of their own. They're a band for people who *like that sort of thing*, an Athlete for Generation 1.

Which isn't to say they're not ruddy good at being 2012's premier Everyband. 'Shallow Bed' – for all its many epic violin maulings, MOR vocal trills and vaguely dusty and mystical lyrics about history books, sacrificial deer and Phrygian lions

– is steeped in artfully crafted melodic shifts and chord progressions that could give a shark shivers. You could argue that Dry The River stand out by not merely relying on a bombastic final third to puff out lightweight tunes, but by making those tunes robust, smart and intriguing journeys in themselves. But then those beige-rock references spew forth and you can't help wishing they'd put as much effort into forging an individual sound as they clearly have sharpening their hooks.

'Animal Skins', 'New Ceremony' and 'Shield Your Eyes' are all cracking tunes that make for a fairly mighty opening salvo, but they also make you want to go listen to other, properly classic albums. When singer Peter Liddle's airy warble echoes away over misty acoustic arpeggios on 'History Book' before the track builds in a bulbous crescendo of crisp indie trumpets, your head suddenly fills with the disturbing image of what a child of Antony Hegarty and Sufjan Stevens might look like. The genuinely thrilling 'The Chambers & The Valves' ups the pace with bursts of righteous choral chanting and horns, but even then it doesn't half remind you how brilliant Doves' 'Pounding' sounded the first time around, or how exhilarating you once found the brass breezes of Beirut's 'Elephant Gun'. 'Shallow Bed' is, essentially, the sound of grandiose alt.indie by committee. Quite possibly the Mercury Prize committee.

Dry The River work best when Liddle's lyrics weave a maudlin narrative between the stately sonic architecture. 'Bible Belt' is a stirring tale of a family torn apart by alcoholism, 'Shaker Hymns' a stark story of a marriage gone awry, 'Demons' a lush study in depression, complete with a tortured orchestral climax. Opaque emoting and purple poetics dotted with classical literary references emphasise the formulaic fudge of the music, but only when a snippet of truth slams the whole thing into focus does the album transcend its influences. Sadly, the final 15 minutes consist of lengthy tracks which throw every ounce of bombast and ballast at the wall, as if to say to the listener "COME ON, THIS ORCHESTRA COST US SHITLOADS, BE MOVED, YOU BASTARDS!"

Ahem. Dry The River have made a very good debut album. It's accomplished, luxuriant, expertly crafted. Your mum will, rightly, love it. But deep down you won't be *excited*. And probably, no-one in the future of rock music will ever say 'New Band X: all a bit 'Shallow Bed'...' **Mark Beaumont**

7

**DOWNLOAD: 'Bible Belt', 'New Ceremony', 'The Chambers & The Valves'**

Catch Dry The River's video for 'The Chambers & The Valves' at [NME.COM/video](http://NME.COM/video)

### THIS IS HARDCORE

what our numbers add up to

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not-even-funny bad	Barely one saving grace	Actively terrible	Woefully bad or lazy	Depressingly substandard	Dead-on average	Better than average	Really good	Exceptionally good	Of-the-year good	Of-the-decade good



## THE MEN

OPEN YOUR HEART SACRED BONES

Us British folks have only just been given a shoeing from 'Leave Home', the second album from NYC hardcore-not-hardcore hellions The Men, and along comes a follow-up. Overall, 'Open Your Heart' is breezier and more tuneful than its predecessor, but this is very relative. There are still buzzing hairballs of psychedelic punk, vocals fighting for priority in the gnarly mix, a Sonic Youth-ish nose for detuned exhilaration in cuts like 'Oscillation' and 'Cube'. Factor in the title track (aka the cheekiest Buzzcocks homage you ever heard) and understand that these cats are riding the DIY-punk-to-lamestream-tonguebath train for very good reasons. **Noel Gardner**

DOWNLOAD: 'Oscillation'

8

## THE MAGNETIC FIELDS

LOVE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

DOMINO

Following the quixotic genre specialising of 2008's 'Distortion' (arch feedback) and 2010's 'Realism' (arch folk), 'Love At The Bottom Of The Sea' finds Stephin Merritt re-adjusting his skinny tie and raising an eyebrow to arch synth-pop. In truth, this is less of an experiment and more of a return to the band's pre-'69 Love Songs' days, recalling early Magnetic Fields albums like 'Get Lost' and 'Holiday'. The music is charming in a rudimentary sort of way, with the focus, as ever, falling to Merritt's beautiful punning and Wildean *bon mots* on highlights such as 'Andrew In Drag' and 'Quick!'. Dancing never felt so smart. **Priya Elan**

DOWNLOAD: 'Quick!', 'Andrew In Drag'

7

## LOSTALONE

I'M A UFO IN THIS CITY GRAPHITE

You can rest assured that a band who all at once imbue memories of Queen, Muse and My Chemical Romance are going to be no shrinking violets. While so many artists prevaricate in a bid to appear louche and cool, Derby's LostAlone throw in everything in their armoury with ne'er a care about a piffling thing like street cred. 'I'm A UFO In This City' is an exuberant rush of virtuosity and showmanship, and it can only be a matter of time before this unabashed explosion of deadly hooks, dirty riffs and lighter-aloft ballads regularly sells out stadiums. Little wonder Gerard Way has been banging on about them. **Jeremy Allen**

DOWNLOAD: 'Love Will Eat You Alive'

8

## SIMIAN GHOST

YOUTH HEIST OR HIT

While listening to the title track off Simian Ghost's second album, 'Youth', you might well find yourself quickly writing off Sandviken native Sebastian Arnström as a Swedish Fleet Fox. You would, however, be a bit of an arse to tar him with that beardy, bristly folk brush. Y'see, that track's obvious vocal comparison to Robin Pecknold aside, its Animal Collective bleep-pop is just one of heaps of interesting nuances in his sound, from the Washed Out chillwave vibe of 'Automation' to the excellent 'The Capitol', on which he narrows the fretboard for some nice Bloc Party-esque guitarlines. There's a smorgasbord of top tunes here. **Jamie Crossan**

DOWNLOAD: 'The Capitol'

7

# BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN

WRECKING BALL COLUMBIA

Taking aim at "fat cats" and "greedy thieves", The Boss returns, 17 albums in and more passionate than ever



From the 'Born To Run' glockenspiel chimes to its easily-misinterpreted-as-patriotic sentiment, the lead-off track from Springsteen's 17th album – a song called 'We Take Care Of Our Own' – suggests familiar ground lies ahead. Furthermore, another of its songs – the epic 'Land Of Hope And Dreams' – was first played live in '99, and features imagery of "thunder rollin' down the track". So far, so Bruce.

But then, if ever America needed a fired-up Boss doing what he does best – in his words, "measuring the distance between the American Dream and American reality" – it's in 2012. And boy oh boy, is Bruce Springsteen fired up. Three years ago now, he claimed to have written his first ever song "about a guy that wears a tie". Turns out it was not his last: with the scene set by the single ("The road of good intentions/Has gone dry as a bone"), we get a quartet of tunes, in swift succession, that lambast "fat cats" ('Easy Money'); talk about the goings-on "up on banker's hill" ('Shackled And Drawn'); rage that "the banker man grows fat, the working man grows thin" ('Jack Of All Trades' featuring Tom bloody Morello on guest guitar); and then sneer at "greedy thieves who came around/And ate the flesh of everything they found" ('Death To My Hometown'). More explicitly still, track six is titled 'This Depression'. Make no mistake, this is an album that is political with a capital P.

Musically, meanwhile, the supposed hip-hop influence has been overstated. 'Rocky Ground' may feature a semi-rap from Michelle Moore, but sonically its beats'n'synth are not doing anything 'Streets Of Philadelphia' didn't do back in '94. Much more prevalent is the folk music that Bruce tackled himself on 2006's 'We Shall Overcome: The Seeger Sessions'. It's a sound that utilises only minimal, organic instrumentation, but is more direct and in-er-face than any wall of electric guitars could ever be. That said, anyone seeking more straight ahead E-Street anthemia will be well served by the aforementioned 'Land Of Hope And Dreams' and the title track – both of which feature saxophone solos from the late Clarence Clemons, and serve as fitting epitaphs.

Two modern music journalist clichés are: 1) asking why it is that only the old guard seem compelled to write songs about Our Times; and 2) questioning if a stadium-filling millionaire rock star can really document the lives of The People. Both are probably pertinent to this album. But when you're listening to a closing song entitled 'We Are Alive', and Springsteen is imploring the world "to stand shoulder to shoulder and heart to heart", you're not thinking about an answer to either. And that, more than anything else, is what makes 'Wrecking Ball' a triumph. **Hamish MacBain**

DOWNLOAD: 'Shackled And Drawn', 'This Depression' 'We Are Alive'

8

## KEY NOTES



Best sleeve of the week  
Chiddy Bang,  
'Breakfast'

All the best offices, from Pixar's to Google's, have cereal rooms, but Chiddy Bang HQ has gone one better, stacking Loco Cocoa and Bangin' Os in a max carb game of Tetris.



Worst sleeve of the week  
The Jezabels,  
'Prisoner'

Not even rubbing sherbet in our eyes and squinting hard will make this, er, "comet" look any less like an intergalactic turd thrutching its way across the desert.





# CHIDDY BANG

**BREAKFAST PARLOPHONE**

*Sure, it's hip-hop for indie fans – but the Philadelphians' debut isn't your standard dull-as-hell nerd-rap tosh*



OK, let's get the obvious out of the way: Chiddy Bang is a terrible name for a hip-hop act. It would be in with a shout of "worst group name of all time" but, well, Rizzle Kicks.

'Breakfast' (again, not exactly inspiring) is the first album proper by Philadelphia's foremost practitioners of indie-fan-friendly hip-hop, but while most such efforts tend to be – how to put this? – uniformly awful, dreary and orchidectomised, 'Breakfast' turns out to be a reasonably hearty meal, definitely sausage and waffles rather than the aural porridge that "alternative hip-hop" summons up.

It won't exactly have hardcore heads testing out the bass capabilities of their in-car systems (with the exception of the opening title track, bombastic G-funk with the brilliant lyric "I'm with a very posh girl that's elegant"). But it is a good-natured little jolly stuffed with hooks and pop nous. The girly sing-song chorus, punches of acoustic guitar and goofball vibe of 'Mind

Your Manners' really is the knees of all the bees, a festival monster in waiting. You'll know the rousing pseudo-soul of 'Ray Charles' by now; that and 'Mind Your Manners' stand out here like erections in a communal sauna, but there's enough going on in the likes of the woozy 'Run It Back', the gently introspective 'Talking To Myself' and the rolling fart-bass of 'Handclaps & Guitars' to prevent the listener from just slapping the pair of them on loop repeat.

Unfortunately, much like the aforementioned Rizzle Kicks, when Chiddy overdo it on the exuberance, the effect is rather like having both your legs enthusiastically humped by tartrazine-crazed puppies – the ghastly, rainbow-bright 'Happening' sounds for all the world like Natasha Bedingfield with added rapping, which is not the kind of thing we should be encouraging. But it still invites a high compliment indeed – to be called "alternative rap", and for it not to be an insult. **Pete Cashmore**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Mind Your Manners', 'Ray Charles'**

6



## CAST

**TROUBLED TIMES** PLEDGEMUSIC



"Each day I find everything I do is just a waste of time", sings Cast frontman John Power here on 'Time Bomb'.

"You don't say!" scoff back the thousands of music snobs who still regard Cast as poster boys for all that was "wrong" with post-Oasis Britpop. No, this fifth studio album (and their first in 10 years) ain't gonna change anyone's mind about them, but it does contain a dozen super-straight-ahead guitar-pop songs that are bright, breezily likeable and pretty undeniably full of life. Cast aren't in anyone's faces going on about "real" music anymore, so should they not just be left alone to do something that they are actually pretty good at? **Liam Cash**

**DOWNLOAD: 'See That Girl'**

7

## NITE JEWEL

**ONE SECOND OF LOVE**

SECRETLY CANADIAN



Those hipsters sure can freshen a neglected pocket of black pop history. Once the Mary Magdalene to Ariel Pink's Jesus, Ramona Gonzalez has turned her attentions to modernising old-school R&B, the kind that ruled the late-'80s before new jack swing eviscerated its last traces of soul gravitas. The windfall is a classy cocktail of downtown funk and after-hours jams which, spare and measured, carry the suggestion of arrested lust and female control. The low-lit 'Mind & Eyes' is Sade for Tigercity fans, while 'Autograph' is so smooth it's criminal. Intimate and charged, this is a superior ode to private desires. **John Calvert**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Autograph'**

8

## FACES TO NAMES...

*What the reviewers are doing this week*



**MARK BEAUMONT**

"Made a prize tit of myself asking Richard Fearless to play 'Groove Is In The Heart' while he was DJing dronetrónica in David Lynch's Paris members' club."



**LISA WRIGHT**

"In an attempt to detract from the sadness of not seeing Blur, I've been reliving the rest of the '90s by watching endless episodes of *Clueless* and acid washing everything I own."



**HAZEL SHEFFIELD**

"I got back from the Bahamas, where I saw Karen O in a dressing gown and Jello Biafra rinsing the 24-hour pizza. Then I saw Karen again at Björk's afterparty... so we're basically friends now."

## KAP BAMBINO

**DEVOTION** BECAUSE



The latest offering of synth-mangled brainfuckery from the French Crystal Castles (Crystal Chateaux?) is certainly not for the weak of eardrum.

Caroline Martial squeaks like *Blade Runner* Barbie over the sound of a funeral pyre loaded with exploding Betamax machines ('Burning') and, witnessing the title track's wall of squall and the industrial brusqueness of 'Trapping', it's hard not to respect the duo's sonic fearlessness. Even so, their stylish ferocity feels redundant on record. This is the kind of music that needs to be heard – and felt – live to really relish. Preferably in a grimy warehouse and with a hazy hold on your serotonin levels. **Leonie Cooper**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Obsess'**

6

## ALEX WINSTON

**KING CON** V2



The curse of the 'kooky' moniker is to be feared. Take a female singer with a brunette barnet, a tingle in her voice and a literary sensibility,

then watch those Kate Bush comparisons come flying out of the cliché cupboard. Detroit Anglophile Winston is bound to be battered by those comparisons, but the truth is rather more prosaic on a debut that is strangely unmoving. The music clasps at the sprawling and elemental (there's a post-Arcade Fire feel, thanks in part to collaborations with Lykke Li's producer Björn Yttling) and her vocals have a Joanna Newsom tickle to them, but it feels too affected to be truly effecting. **Priya Elan**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Locomotive'**

5

## THE JEZABELS

**PRISONER** PLAY IT AGAIN SAM



The debut album from this Australian bunch is the end result of a year of touring – and it shows. They're tight in the way that only the threat of

bottling can foster. Though it's hard to classify, clean-cut fuzz-pop is the order of the day, while ballad 'Long Highway', instrumental track 'Austerlitz' and the strings of 'Deep Wide Ocean' give things a noirish turn. Definite highlight is 'City Girl' – think Cyndi Lauper, two gins in and morose, duetting with Sophie B Hawkins (of 'Damn I Wish I Was Your Lover' fame). It could slip into an '80s movie soundtrack, but lead singer Hayley Mary's vocals carry the track out of pastiche and into reality. **Ailbhe Malone**

**DOWNLOAD: 'City Girl', 'Deep Wide Ocean'**

6

## BLEEDING KNEES CLUB

**NOTHING TO DO**

COLUMBIA/IAMSOUND



They look like they've been plucked from the casting couch of a Gus Van Sant movie, are so young they think it's actually acceptable to cite Wavves

as an influence, and they're already signed to a major for their debut album. These are just a few of the many reasons to detest teenage Queensland duo Bleeding Knees Club. And yet, vexingly, 'Nothing To Do' is a real struggle to hate. The fact is, they have an undeniable knack for turning out two-minute garage pop songs with such warm-hearted, wide-eyed brio that shooting them down seems as callous as steamrolling a basket full of kittens. **Tom Edwards**

**DOWNLOAD: 'Problem Child'**

7





# VARIOUS ARTISTS

**ROUGH TRADE COUNTER CULTURE 11** ROUGH TRADE SHOPS/V2

*Paying close attention in 2011? The indie label's annual compilation maps its way through the alternative year*



Though we live in an age of playlists, mixtapes and mash-ups, Rough Trade's 'Counter Culture 11' proves that a well-made, old-fashioned compilation can still

shine new light on songs you thought you knew. The 42 tracks on the label's annual mix of the preceding year's customer favourites and staff recommendations forge intriguing factions when approached as a snapshot of alternative music in 2011.

As any loveorn mixtape-maker knows, the beauty is all in the assembly. Fife's King Creosote invokes wilful inertia on disc one with the lovely 'Bats In The Attic', which resonates through the looping guitar lines of Kurt Vile's 'Peeping Tomboy'. Highlights include The History Of Apple Pie's lilting, jangly 'You're So Cool' and the translucent trip-hop of Little Dragon's 'Ritual Union', but there are curveballs too. 'Bowface En

Provence', by Mara Carlyle, has a roomy Latin feel, her vintage vocals gleaming in between lumpen acoustic plodders by The Head And The Heart and The Decemberists.

Largely rooted in traditional songwriting, disc one takes a late turn into electronic sounds, with SBTRKT's garage-resurrecting 'Wildfire' and Glasgow's Koreless, who strips dubstep of its grit with airy, marching synths. Disc two is a more disorientating, abrasive listen. But in the post-industrial electronics of London's Factory Floor, the cold, lusty mechanics of Azari & III and the intense bass of VCMG's 'Spock', there's the strange sense of a shared DNA. Hip-hop is glaringly notable by its absence – Death Grips or Shabazz Palaces would fit perfectly here – but all the same, there's a magic in the way that disparate songs, burnt onto plastic, can present such a thrilling, united front. *Hazel Sheffield*

**DOWNLOAD:** Mara Carlyle, 'Bowface En Provence' Big Freedia, 'Azz Everywhere'

## WE ARE AUGUSTINES

**RISE YE SUNKEN SHIPS**

TURNOUT/OXCART RECORDS



Emotions are great an' that but you don't necessarily have to parade all of them about all of the time. 'Rise Ye Sunken Ships', then, is a record

that's emotive to the extreme, but in between the Gaslight Anthem-esque big choruses and oh-so-yearning vocals it's all so full of feelings you just want to give them some Kleenex and tell them to man the hell up. When the constant heart-straining actually relents ('East Los Angeles') or the trio take a full-on turn for The Boss territory ('Book Of James'), 'Rise Ye Sunken Ships' is actually pretty great, but guys, just dial it down a bit yeah? *Lisa Wright*

**DOWNLOAD:** 'East Los Angeles'

6

## JONQUIL

**POINT OF GO** BLESSING FORCE



There is of course no rule on how many projects a musician can have, but listening to 'Point Of Go' does beg the question just how different Hugo

Manuel's solo Chad Valley moniker and his band Jonquil actually are these days. Though 'It's My Part' and 'Mexico' come steeped in that inexplicably Oxford-evoking guitar work, Manuel's trans-Atlantic pop influences dominate, most notably on the sunset ambience of 'Point Of Go (Part 2)' and 'History Of Headaches' amorphous backdrop. It makes for fine pop music, yet you sense, somehow, that there might be a reason why half the group left to go off and form Trophy Wife instead. *Simon Jay Catling*

**DOWNLOAD:** 'Point Of Go (Part 2)'

7

## THE RIDER

*What we're watching and reading this week*



**DVD**  
**Game Of Thrones**  
**Season 1**

Consensual incestuous bumming and casual beheadings are just two of the delights on offer in HBO's awesome adaptation of George RR Martin's epic. The story itself is no slouch either.



**Book**  
**Jim Morrison: The Lords and The New Creatures**  
Originally published in 1989, this anthology of Jim Morrison's poetry – with smouldering black-and-white photos – gets a reboot to inspire a new generation.



**Book**  
**The Rum Diary**  
It's a week of cult icons in the Rider this week, as Johnny Depp takes on his old pal Hunter S Thompson's classic autobiographical novel in this classy biopic directed by Bruce Robinson.

## THIS WEEK'S SINGLES

reviewed by NME's  
**HAMISH MACBAIN**



## REAL ESTATE

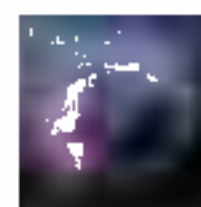
**EASY DOMINO**



The video for this is a satire on the, like, corporate bands who aggressively ply their wares via evil street teams and bribes to DJs. Similarly, the music – jangly and melodic – belongs in that long-lost era when people used to sneer at indie bands who put their tunes in adverts. Cor, those were the days, eh?

## DISCOPOLIS

**ZENITHOBIA KIDS**



Speaking of which, if M83 ever stop knocking out dreamy electronic backdrops that are perfect for flogging fancy new smartphones, then these

boys will be quids in. In the meantime, it would be ace if this single was massive and they got on Jonathan Ross, just so we could see him attempt to pronounce their name and song title without drowning his entire studio audience in spittle.

## DOG IS DEAD

**TWO DEVILS ATLANTIC**

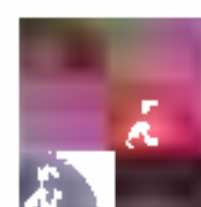


It would be easy to sit here and make some really nasty jokes about how these guys singing "We'll be dead by summer" is somewhat prophetic...

but instead let's just note that if you've been sat waiting for Coldplay to faithfully cover the Pixies' 'Where Is My Mind?' then your time has arrived.

## CASS McCOMBS

**LOVE THINE ENEMY DOMINO**



Cass' second-of-two 2011 albums 'Humor Risk' was at its best when he was just kicking back and writing dumb sarcastic pop songs with about three words in them, of which this is one. Sounds like the bits of The Velvet Underground that the legions of boring idiots who never stop going on about how into The Velvet Underground they are appear to have skipped, ie the fun parts.

## MARCUS COLLINS

**SEVEN NATION ARMY SONY**



Hard to see why people are getting so wound up about this passable plastic soul cover of Jack'n'Meg's finest hour, which is more than fine for people who

find Maverick Sabre a bit too raw. The best thing that could ever have happened for *The X Factor* was for Little Mix to triumph over Marcus, 'cos now people may remember it's supposed to be about pop, not authenticity.

## DUANE THE TEENAGE WEIRDO

**POSTCARD FROM HELL THIRD MAN**



Another Third Man Records "odddity" to buy on weird-coloured seven-inch vinyl, listen to once, and file at the front of your record collection so people think you're bohemian and eccentric and sexy. People will go, "What's this?" and you go, "My second favourite Detroit to call himself a streetwalking cheetah". Assuming they don't then go, "I read that blurb on the website, too", you might just be about to get laid.



# LIVE

FROM PUBS TO ARENAS, THE WEEK'S TOP GIGS

Edited by Louis Pattison



## SKRILLEX

**O2 ACADEMY BRIXTON, LONDON** FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17

*The man charged with dubstep's murder is acquitting himself well as far as packing out venues and confusing the old goes – is it time to stop arguing about him and just embrace the bass?*

**I**n an age where broadsheet newspapers fulminate long and hard over the pop stars of the day and 45-year-old men think it's acceptable to wear baseball caps, it's rare to come across that fabled social divide, the generation gap. That's why everyone is talking about Skrillex. When it comes to the new crown prince of American dubstep, there is no fence to sit on: you've got the lovers on one side, the haters on the other, and a gulf as big as the Grand Canyon between.

To the critics, Sonny Moore is the guy that "killed dubstep", the know-nothing Yank who took the serious, critic-friendly sound made by chippy young men from Croydon and made it crass and colourful and... well, *fun*. Now, let's hear from the fans.

"WOOOARGH!" The 10,000-odd kids that have snapped up tickets to two sold-out nights at Brixton Academy don't conform to any familiar tribe. There's goths, cybergoths, candy ravers, a bunch dressed as Father Christmas, just plain *freaks*... basically, the crowd the Klaxons dreamed of having, before their gigs filled up with boys in cardigans. The stage is done out like the controls of the Death Star, and as Sonny Moore appears at the helm with a "Brixton, put your fuckin' hands up!", the beat drops on 'Breakn' A Sweat', the stage explodes with fireworks, and the floor becomes something somewhere between a rave and a moshpit.

There's nothing as prissy as tension or release here: the dubby 'First Of The Year (Equinox)', a re-tooled version of

La Roux's 'In For The Kill', and 'Summr' (featuring the voice of Moore's new squeeze, Ellie Goulding) come like a sustained artillery barrage. The basslines don't just wobble: they growl,

*This is the crowd Klaxons dreamed of before their gigs got full of boys in cardigans*

bare teeth, sprout spikes, morph like liquid metal terminators to slide down your throat and then burst alien-like out of your ribcage. And the visuals follow suit, the screen a riot of exploding heads, rainbow spraying LOLcats and an imperious zombie DJ,

who Moore apparently controls using motion-sensor technology.

But the unexpected thing is that underneath all the alien wreckage, there's a weird emotion to Skrillex's

sound. Things wrap up with an unreleased song wherein a sped-up diva bidding us farewell over yearning rave synths. It's a

touching moment. And then the drop hits like a candy-coloured H-bomb, and blows minds all over again. Did Skrillex kill dubstep? Or did he reinvent it? Look down. There's a generation gap opening, and it's time to work out on which side you stand. *Harry Watkins*



# KURT VILE/ SONIC BOOM/REAL ESTATE

KOKO, LONDON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

*If you came to swoon, better look away now – Kurt's flexing his noise*

"I dunno..." shrugs Kurt Vile, strumming absently on his dobro backstage. "For a while, I appeased that whole 'play the new record for the new audience' thing. It's cool, because it gave us more fans, but, after a while... I'm not gonna be just playing that record."

We're hours from Vile's biggest UK headline show yet, and it seems folk are in for a few surprises. Not least a support slot from hypnotic noise terrorist Sonic Boom (here at Vile's request after the two began talking online). Back in the '80s, Boom – aka Pete Kember – was compadre of Jason 'Spiritualized' Pierce in druggy acid-droners Spacemen 3, and while his former bandmate has mellowed with age, Kember's not for changing. How will the fans who fell for last year's gentle breakthrough album 'Smoke Ring For My Halo' react?

"I dunno..." shrugs Vile. "It would be no surprise to somebody who was a fan of my older music to be playing

with Sonic Boom because that's part of it... The Violators are very Spacemen 3-influenced."

Kember, now trying out the dobro ("what's that you've got in the soundhole there?" he quizzes Vile), agrees they share musical common ground. "A lot of American blues-based stuff, rock'n'roll based stuff..."

We'll see. First, Real Estate set the

*It's a set designed to show that there's more to Kurt than soft, sad charm*

mood for the expectant Vile fans as surely as a scarf cast over a lampshade, filling the venue with butter-soft, caramel-sweet undulations of sweetly sad guitar, teasing out closer 'All The Same' into an sleepy, honey-sticky epic.

Everyone sighs and thinks how agreeable life is, really. And then Kember stalks onstage like Old Man

Winter come to shit on Real Estate's summery biscuits. His clean, engines-of-the-future thrums are hypnotic, but not in a nice way. Pistoning beats, arcing flares of noise, ominous, funereal keys... life is not looking so agreeable anymore, and he ends to undeserved, if maybe understandable, boos.

When our lushly haired hero lopez on, he begins innocuously enough, with an acoustic strum through 'Can't Come'. As The Violators join him on stage, they move into 'On Tour', its warning "Watch out for this one/ he'll stab you in the back for fun" filtering through

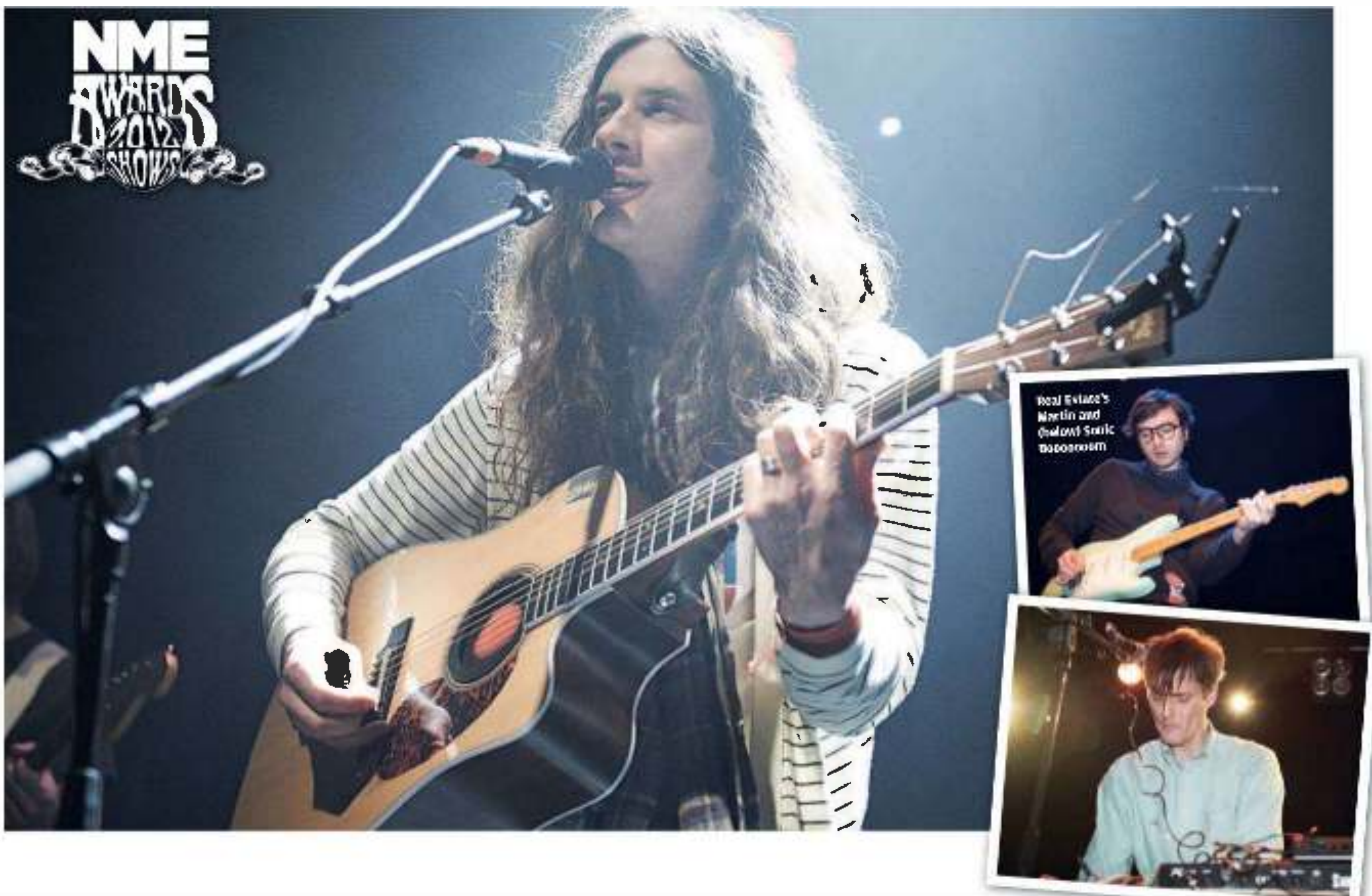
long, reverberating acoustic chords. The band mostly shuffle, gazes turned downwards, focused on the vibes, and the vibes are getting interesting.

Tonight's set seems designed to demonstrate there's more to Kurt than 'Smoke Ring...'s soft, sad charms, ignoring cuts like 'Baby's Arms' and 'Society Is My Friend' and dipping into

gnarlier moments from the three records that preceded it. New songs that Vile is working on, he says, are "driven by electricity, but not to the extent of like, Black Sabbath. Still pretty." His prettiness is always complicated; covering Springsteen's 'Downbound Train', his softly surly voice adds extra layers of doubt to the difficult emotions of The Boss' original. He goes back to acoustic guitar for 'Peeping Tomboy', delicate perversity wrapped in his beautiful mumble.

The encore begins with a dark, *Apocalypse Now* take on 'Smoke Ring...'s title track and finishes with the return of Sonic Boom. Boos met his name as Vile thanked him earlier, but no-one's quite got the guts to do it to his bony face. A heady, heavy cover of Spacemen 3's 'Hey Man' is a perfect closer, Kember shredding away, Vile haring up and down the fretboard, dropping to his knees, lost in sound.

Kurt Vile, then: no longer just there for the lovely things in life – and all the better for it. *Emily Mackay*







# NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH FLYING BIRDS

**MOTORPOINT ARENA, SHEFFIELD** SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19

*Oasis chart-toppers and B-sides sit seamlessly among last year's efforts as The Chief acquaints himself with packed-out arenas and screaming fans*

**A**lreet?" says Noel Gallagher. As opening lines go, it's not a bad way of building a rapport with the South Yorkshire folk that more or less fill this arena. This is the most tonight's audience get in the way of verbal interaction from their leather-clad deity, at least until a breast-baring desperado in the front row catches his eye. A flash of mammary seems to lift Noel's mood somewhat, and he dubs their owner his "new favourite person of all time". But despite all her best efforts, as the band lurch into a raucous version of 'AKA... Broken Arrow', the masses choose to focus on Noel and his High Flying Birds, rather than one slightly drunk, low-slung one. Noel Gallagher is no stranger to an

arena crowd. This is his first set of bigger gigs performed with his new band, though, and not only have they done a decent job of packing the place out, the atmosphere is jubilant and there's a feeling that the new songs connect.

*In moments like this, Noel seems to be reaching beyond where Oasis could take him*

Besides, there's no real need for banter when the anticipation for old Oasis favourites keeps the gathered throng on tenterhooks all night.

Tonight's not a nostalgia trip, though. Noel's voice is set like a knife-edge,

crystalline and controlled, while the band are impressive. Russell Pritchard's basslines seem to mine a vein through the history of his native Liverpool, giving Noel's songs a spring to their step. On the Roses-esque 'Everybody's On The Run', a choir stands and lifts the song to crescendo. In moments like this, Noel seems to be reaching to a place beyond where Oasis could ever have taken him.

It's the back catalogue, though, that gives the High Flying Birds a free pass to an early arena tour. Noel tackles 'Supersonic' with just keyboard player Mike Rowe and minimal percussion from drummer Jeremy Stacey,

reinventing it as a melancholic heart-string twanger. 'Don't Look Back In Anger' marks the last leg of an all-Oasis encore, and the crowd may be left with the chords of glories past ringing in their ears, but it feels that Noel is here to prove a point tonight. His new material, and his new bandmembers, are every bit as deserving of an arena crowd than anything or anyone that's gone before. *Hayley Avron*

## SETLIST

- (It's Good) To Be Free
- Mucky Fingers
- Everybody's On The Run
- Dream On
- If I Had a Gun...
- The Good Rebel
- The Death of You And Me
- Freaky Teeth
- Supersonic
- (I Wanna Live In A Dream In My) Record Machine
- AKA... What a Life!
- Talk Tonight
- Soldier Boys And Jesus Freaks
- AKA... Broken Arrow
- Half The World Away
- (Stranded On) The Wrong Beach
- Whatever
- Little By Little
- The Importance Of Being Idle
- Don't Look Back In Anger



# NME AWARDS 2012 SHOWS

## TUNE-YARDS

O2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE, LONDON

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15

**T**he stage is sparse: two standalone drums at the front, a percussion range at the back. Merrill Garbus strides out to the front, smiles, and an astonishing a cappella is unleashed. Vowels tumble out in a range that crosses from throat-singing to full belt. She samples her voice, and dissonance turns to harmony as it fills the room. She begins to drum, leading into a vigorous 'Do You Want To Live?', as two leaping saxophonists and a bassist filter onstage. 'Es-so's' mix of intricate rhythms and spoken-word segments blends into crowd favourite 'Gangsta', and no matter what kind of gymnastics Garbus' voice is performing, it remains focused. As she brings the night to a close, she mentions that this is the biggest gig Tune-Yards have ever headlined. On the closing 'My Country', Garbus sings of her doubts as to where she belongs. The short answer? Right here. *Ailbhe Malone*

## TOTALLY ENORMOUS EXTINCT DINOSAURS/ D/R/U/G/S

HEAVEN, LONDON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16

**T**he electronica concert brings with it an eternal conundrum: how to inject an element of showmanship to a man behind a bunch of boxes, pressing buttons? Tonight's headliner gets round it by dressing up as a creature from the cretaceous era, but Manchester's Callum Wright – aka D/R/U/G/S – shuns such frippery. Never looking up once, Wright plucks at his gear like a mad computer sprite, taking ambient chimes and lacing them with a ruthlessly omnipresent, four-to-the-floor house kick. Next up, Totally Enormous Extinct Dinosaurs opens up with James Blake-style, weebly synth vamps – but jazzy minimalism is not on the menu. Instead, he delivers 40-odd minutes of inspired lunacy, taking in top-drawer synth-pop, booty bass, glitter guns and lightshows that'd give a Bond villain serious laser envy. An extinction-level event, then. *Alex Denney*

## BAND OF SKULLS

XOYO, LONDON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15

**F**resh from supporting The Black Keys on their recent UK jaunt, it seems Band of Skulls' main intention tonight is to remind everyone that they're more than capable of playing first fiddle as well. They've obviously picked up a few tricks along the way. Between the lengthy setlist, sardine-can crowd and the fact that this much noise really needs bigger speakers, it's clear that the Southampton trio's growling blues-rock has long since outgrown XOYO's basement confines. Entering with the glam-infused stomp of recent album offering 'Sweet Sour', the three-piece are a streamlined, confident proposition from the get-go. There's a tendency to rely on the old faves of debut 'Baby Darling Doll Face Honey', but going on the The Raconteurs-ish 'The Devil Takes Care Of His Own' and 'You're Not Pretty, But You Got It Going On' – its baritone vocals and squalling guitars recalling prime QOTSA – they needn't fear their very bright future so much. *Lisa Wright*

## CLOUD CONTROL

ELECTRIC BALLROOM, LONDON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17

**S**ince coming out with their airy debut 'Bliss Release' in 2010, New South Wales' Cloud Control have wafted across oceans and beyond. And as that call of duty approaches its conclusion with their headline NME Awards Show, they've grown muscle to match the prettiness. They're certainly a long way from home, but the foursome are greeted by north London like something approaching heroes. The elegant swoon of 'Gold Canary' has spread its wings into a real-life live favourite, while their closest thing to an anthem, 'There's Nothing In The Water We Can't Fight', envelops the Electric Ballroom like some kind of psychedelic-scented paintbomb. Keep that sort of thing up, and they could yet stand every chance of continuing the ascent powered by (the good kind of) hot air, and up to the heights of former touring bigger bros like Vampire Weekend and Arcade Fire. For Cloud Control, the sky really is the limit. *Dan Martin*



## THE BIG PINK

RELENTLESS GARAGE, LONDON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20

*They've taken a bit of a critical kicking lately – but tonight Robbie and Milo breathe fresh life into their new material*

**I** can't believe how full this room is," says a wide-eyed Robbie Furze as he surveys the bedraggled throng squeezed into The Garage. And, if NME were feeling ever-so-slightly snarky, we'd be half-inclined to agree. After the three-year wait for 'Future This', even the most sturdily devout of The Big Pink nuts would concur that their second coming erred on the underwhelming side; tonight, Robbie and Milo are riding into London less conquering heroes standing atop chariots of fire, and more slightly sheepish hobbledehos trundling in on horse and cart.

Not that it matters a jot tonight, though, because if someone told The Big Pink that they'd been subject to a fair bit of scurrility recently, they don't

seem to have paid heed. From the opening brainworm squelch of 'Jump Music', they're on a mission to boot some life into the new material: 'Stay Gold' fizzles and hisses, powered by a steampunk engine, while the likes of 'The Palace' and 'Rubbernecking' sound less maddeningly half-arsed than they do on plastic.

Robbie and Milo are anything but laid back, too, with Robbie a picture of preened rock'n'roll posturing, Milo bashing his synth like a frenzied mad scientist. Here, the grandiose, slow burn heartbreak of '77' is at last transformed into the beery anthem it always threatened to be, while Robbie even cuts loose with some squealing fret-wanking before leading into 'Too Young To Love'. If 'Future This' was a flagrant assault on rock's big leagues but lacked the

courage of its own convictions, they're righting those wrongs with a hefty dose of stadium-sized confidence.

It helps too, of course, that The Big Pink always have the nuclear option of some bona-fide pop bangers in their arsenal. The silky, smoky 'Velvet' is casually tossed out near the beginning of the evening, while the crowd toppling 'Dominos' is demoted to penultimate position in the setlist. But really, tonight's all about 'Future This' finally being dragged, kicking and screaming into the modern age. "I know I'm not unique, wear my scars with pride/Doing it on my own", yelps Robbie during a raucous swansong of 'Lose Your Mind', but he isn't, really. This evening, you'd wager, The Big Pink feel a lot less isolated than they must have done for some time. *Ben Hewitt*



"Ladies and gentlemen.  
This is your captain  
speaking..."



# BRUISE CRUISE FESTIVAL

**CARNIVAL IMAGINATION CRUISE SHIP,  
MIAMI TO NASSAU** FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10 - MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13

*It's carnage in the Caribbean as everyone gets on board with Fucked Up and friends*

**H**e can't do that in my bar!" yells a wily-looking guy in a white tuxedo. We're at Señor Frogs, a waterfront bar in the Bahamas, and there's a kid totally losing his shit to Fucked Up, stagediving into the raised arms of 30 moshers, and bouncing along the ceiling. "Get him out, get him out!" panics the restaurateur, his establishment's usual clientele of middle-aged couples sipping foot-long Slippery Nipples to the soundtrack of the 'Macarena' apparently having not prepared him for a set of shirt-free hardcore punk and the chaos it brings in its wake. But just as Mr Stagedive

looks like he's going to make an exit through the back door, three huge Americans in black security T-shirts wade into the crowd and grab him by the collar. One leans in to talk to White Tux. "It's OK, he can stay," he says. "We deal with this all the time."

Welcome to the Bruise Cruise, where security are more likely to save your neck than steal your drugs. Now in its second year, the boat-bound festival sails from Miami to the Bahamas on a three-day rock'n'roll binge in February, mixing 500 heavily tattooed 'bruisers' with 2,000 regular passengers aboard a 70-tonne vessel.

For three days, the likes of Thee Oh Sees, Fucked Up and Ty Segall play shows in neon conference rooms with names like Xanadu and Shangri La. On Friday evening, Karen O casually props up the bar in a dressing gown. On the

*The great thing about  
being drunk all the time  
is you never get seasick*

Serenity spa deck on Saturday, nervous bloggers sit chatting in a jacuzzi with King Khan. At the security briefing, Thee Oh Sees' John Dwyer hands out toothpicks while alarms rage above.

It's safe to say the rest of the Imagination's holidaymakers don't know what's hit them.

One thing the organisers – booking agent Michelle Cable and Jonas Stein, formerly of Be Your Own Pet, now of Turbo Fruits – have down is the line-up. Detroit's The Dirtbombs kick things off, as the Miami coastline sinks over the horizon, taking phone signals with it. We're on cruise time now. The ship pitches violently and Bruisers stumble around the dancefloor, half-drunk, half-dancing, through the crazed garage funk of 'Underdog'. "The great thing about being drunk all the time is you never get seasick!" says security guard Steve. This is a suspension of logic that lasts for 72 hours.







Classy punters enjoy posh booze (left); Fucked Up just wanna get trolleyed



We see Thee Oh Sees (left) while Damian sees he may have missed boarding time



Damian hosts The Dating Game and (above) finds an O

Thee Oh Sees' set pits two drummers against one another, bassist Petey Dammit pumping his inked head with alarming stamina, John Dwyer purring and shredding at his guitar, blue eyes bulging madly. Downstairs, there's fine dining, Indonesian waiters bopping to Flo Rida as they serve up three courses. By 11pm, as regular cruisers stumble out of onboard nightclub Illusions or chain-smoke at poker tables, everyone with a wristband is queuing at Xanadu for New Orleans bounce artist Vockah Redu, who mounts the tiny stage with two dancers dressed in skintight gold lamé and unleashes rhymes until the mic goes dead.

Next morning, all 850-feet of the Imagination is docked at Nassau. Reckless cruisers stop in at the waterside booth that sells weed and hires scooters – a dangerous combination – while others stumble over to the beach, where King Khan is explaining why he owns a necklace made of human teeth. Tonight's

festivities take place at the aforementioned Señor Frogs. Hot ticket is The Togas, a garage covers band made up of Ty Segall, Philip Strange Boys, Shannon from Shannon And The Clams and Lance Wille of Reigning Sound, who emerge completely wasted and wearing actual togas to rattle through tracks by The Kinks, The Temptations and The Undertones. Half an hour later, during The Soft Pack's set, Ty Segall gets trapped between his friends in a booth and is sick all over himself. Then he stands up and does it again.

Fucked Up close Saturday, and Damian 'Pink Eyes' Abraham,

who so far has played Bruise Cruise's genial compere, goes into Fucked Up mode. Tearing his T-shirt to shreds, he wades into the circle pit, climbs on the bar, and hangs from the rafters like an enormous monkey. *NME* catches up with him afterwards. "I was really apprehensive about coming," he reveals. "I'm not a big fan of the outdoors and I don't like beaches. But I am having the time of my life! I have drunk the tropical punch. I have completely bought into the cruising lifestyle. I can't wait to come on another one."

It's cold on Sunday and everyone feels like shit. We huddle in a conference room below deck, where Pink Eyes – now suited – does his Paddy McGuinness routine as compere of *The Dating Game*. It's like *Take Me Out*, except contestants get condoms and vibrators instead of a holiday, because they're on one of those. Afterwards, TV On The Radio's Kyp Malone soothes some aching

heads with an intimate acoustic set.

Later on there's a dance party with Mr Quintrón, but most people are totally spent after King Khan's killer set, which sees honking brass flank the semi-naked form of Khan with his necklace of human teeth, his feather headdress and catalogue of garage soul that has everyone dancing like loons. By the time the Imagination pulls into Miami port on Monday morning, all anyone can talk about is coming back to do it all over again next year. *Hazel Sheffield*

Stream Fucked Up's 'Year Of The Tiger' at [NME.COM](http://NME.COM)



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SATURDAY 7th JULY

# THE STONE ROSES

NOEL GALLAGHER'S  
HIGH FLYING BIRDS

DAVID GUETTA CALVIN HARRIS

JESSIE J THE VACCINES TWO DOOR CINEMA CLUB  
EMELI SANDE BEN HOWARD

AMY MACDONALD THE COURTEENERS THE MACCABEES  
ENTER SHIKARI MAJOR LAZER RIZZLE KICKS PETER DOHERTY  
SKREAM FEAT SGT POKES BENGA THE WAILERS EROL ALKAN DAPPY  
FAKE BLOOD JACK BEATS CROOKERS ALABAMA SHAKES

SUNDAY 8th JULY

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LEN FAKI BAND OF SKULLS PAN-POT

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(line-up subject to change)

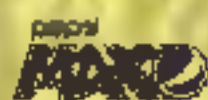
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FRIDAY 1 JUNE  
O<sub>2</sub> ACAD OXFORD  
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O<sub>2</sub> ACAD IRMI F M  
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# SPECTOR

MAY 2012


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WED 02	GLASGOW DRAM MOR	0844 499 9990	SAT 12	GUILDFORD BOILER ROOM	0844 811 0051
THU 03	EDINBURGH THE ELECTRIC CIRCUS	0844 499 9990	SUN 13	CAMBRIDGE UNION SOCIETY	01223 511 511
FRI 04	MANCHESTER SOUND CONTROL	0161 832 1111	MON 14	BIRMINGHAM HMV TEMPLE ROOM	0844 248 5037
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MEN: 0871 908 9919  
GAY: 0871 908 9944  
15+ Helpline 0844 944 0844  
0871 a 10p per min. Network extras  
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**WOMEN CALL FREE\***  
**0800 075 9128**  
\*0800 = Free from BT Landline

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# GIG GUIDE

THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

*Edited by Laura Snapes*

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## BOOKING NOW



### THE FUTUREHEADS

**STARTS:** Bristol Colston Hall, Apr 3

DON'T  
MISS

For many bands, the idea of stripping their sound back usually entails strapping on a battered acoustic and divesting their hearts of the kind of dross and dirge that should probably have stayed well locked in there. Not The Futureheads. On their forthcoming fifth album, they've put away the guitars and pared things back to their most vital sounds: their handsome voices. "Pared back" isn't really the right way to describe it, however – there's nothing gentle about the a cappella 'Rant', a vigorous, strangely affecting collection of their own old songs, traditional numbers, and classics by the likes of Richard Thompson, Sparks and Kelts ('Acapella', obviously). We reckon this off-kilter record could be the re-making of them, as could these shows where the instruments will be left at home.



### MARINA & THE DIAMONDS

**STARTS:** Manchester Cathedral, May 4  
Marina's second album finally gets a proper release date – 'Electra Heart' is out April 30, just before she embarks on a spring tour.



### THE CRIBS

**STARTS:** Nottingham Rock City, May 7  
You've heard new song 'Chi-Town' – now catch the rest of the Jarman bros' fifth album, 'In The Belly Of The Brazen Bull', on this UK jaunt.



### BRENDAN BENSON

**STARTS:** Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms, May 21  
The Raconteur releases new solo album 'What Kind Of World' on April 30, and then heads out on a UK tour.



### SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL

**STARTS:** Hatfield University, May 26  
Taking Back Sunday (pictured) headline the punk double-header (also playing at Leeds on May 27) with Cancer Bats and others.



### MIIKE SNOW

**STARTS:** Manchester HMV Ritz, May 30  
The theatrical Swedish electropoppers release new album 'Happy To You' on March 26, and tour with Niki & The Dove and Alex Metric.



### EVOLUTION FESTIVAL

**STARTS:** Gateshead Quayside, Jun 4  
Dizzee Rascal (pictured) and Deadmau5 headline the Newcastle festival, with Maximo Park, Miles Kane and Spector down the bill.



### DOWNLOAD

**STARTS:** Donington Park, Jun 8  
Black Veil Brides, NOFX, Opeth, Nightwish, Shinedown and Killswitch Engage join The Prodigy (pictured), Metallica and Black Sabbath.



### CHAZZSTOCK FESTIVAL

**STARTS:** Leicestershire Stanford Hall, Jun 9  
Dedicated to the memory of Ou Est Le Swimming Pool's Charles Haddon, Chazzstock features The Vaccines (pictured) and The Horrors.



### LOVEBOX

**STARTS:** London Victoria Park, Jun 15  
Friendly Fires (pictured), Hot Chip and Crystal Castles join Azealia Banks, Azari & III, Toddla T, The Rapture, Patrick Wolf and more at this year's Lovebox.



### Y-NOT FESTIVAL

**STARTS:** Derbyshire Peak District National Park, Aug 3  
The Wombats, The Subways, The Pigeon Detectives and Summer Camp (pictured) are all set for the East Midlands fest.



### SW4 WEEKENDER

**STARTS:** London Clapham Common, Aug 25  
The weekend returns with Chase & Status (pictured) confirmed – expect more announcements soon.



### AZEALIA BANKS

**STARTS:** Manchester Club Academy, Sep 28  
Azealia's been tearing it up on the NME Awards Tour – now see her headline her own UK stint, which hopefully heralds the release of her debut album.



# PICK of the WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



## SLEIGH BELLS

**STARTS:** London Electric Ballroom, Mar 1

NME  
PICK

You can almost guess what Sleigh Bells sound like just by looking at them. Slick leather, dark glasses (Derek), diabolical red lipstick (Alexis), stares set to "fuck you". But one of the most interesting things about the destructive-sounding duo is that beneath the squall and scree, beneath the clangs of scrap iron scavenged from nu-metal's past, there's a massive pop sensibility to their songs in a way that there's just not in bands like Crystal Castles, to whom they're often compared. It's something they've used to maximum effect on new album 'Reign Of Terror', which builds on its predecessor's serrated legacy by introducing contrasting bright jangle and doomy claustrophobia to their dark palette, generating the effect of an FM radio spluttering away in hell. Go down screaming with them at these UK shows this week.



### Don't Miss FIRST AID KIT

**STARTS:** Bristol Thekla, Feb 29

Despite growing up in Stockholm, sisters Johanna and Klara Söderberg's latest album, 'The Lion's Roar', sounds like a lost Nashville relic, all naked zither and soaring pedal steel. It's the kind of record that proves the duo's staying power - impressive stuff, considering that they came to the fore via a nifty YouTube cover of a Fleet Foxes song. Pop along and be charmed.



### Everyone's Talking About SHARON VAN ETTEN

**STARTS:** Rough Trade East, Feb 29

Sharon's third album, the phenomenal 'Tramp', has just been released to universally glowing reviews - we gave it 9/10, and called it one of the greatest albums of 2012 so far. Its blend of heartbreak and self-belief, mixed with stormy guitars and enticing drones, make for a potent mix that sticks in the mind long after the music finishes.



### Radar Stars DZ DEATHRAYS

**STARTS:** London Old Blue Last, Mar 6

We've had a sneaky listen, and we're convinced that once DZ Deathrays' debut album comes out, they'll be able to conquer wherever the dickens they like. For now, they have a three-night residency at London's OBL, supported by Run Walk! on the first night (6), Bos Angeles, Crushed Beaks and Matt Emery the next (7), and closing with Hawk Eyes and Eager Teeth (8).

# WEDNESDAY

February 29

## ABERDEEN

Bad Panda Snafu 01224 596 111

Dog Is Dead Cafe Drummond 01224 624642

## BATH

James Morton Band Bell

01225 460426

Jenjen Curfew Inn 01225 424 210

## BIRMINGHAM

Beth Jeans Houghton/Goodnight

Lenin Hare & Hounds 0870 264 3333

Brother & Bones/Capital Sun/High

Horses Flapper 0121 236 2421

John J Presley Yardbird

0121 212 2524

Olle Jobs Red Lion 0121 444 7258

Spotlight Kid/We Writers/

Idle Playthings 02 Academy 3

0870 477 2000

SBTRKT HMV Institute 0844 248 5037

Ten Second Epic The Ballroom

0121 448 0797

This Is The Kit Kitchen Garden Cafe

0121 443 4725

## BRISTOL

Fanfario Blind Tiger 01273 681228

Harry Oakwood Latest Music Bar

01273 687 171

Safehouse Open House 01273 880102

Soko Komedia 01273 647 100

The War On Drugs Concorde 2

01273 673 311

## BRISTOL

Ben Howard 02 Academy

0870 477 2000

Cold Specks Louisiana 0117 926 5978

First Aid Kit Thekla 08713 100000

InMe/LostAlone/Mojo Fury Fleece

0117 945 0996

Kids Can't Fly/The First/Sell Your

Sky The Cooler 0117 945 0999

Mr Fogg Croft (Front Bar)

0117 987 4144

Woman's Hour/The Vees Start The

Bus 0117 930 4370

## CAMBRIDGE

Rachel Semanni/Ethan Ash CB2

01223 508 503

## CARDIFF

Allo Darlin'/This Many Boyfriends

Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

Demo/Chinese Finger Trap Arts

Institute 0871 230 1094

Gabrielle Apiln Clwb Ifor Bach

029 2023 2199

Mr Tom Gwdihw Cafe Bar

029 2039 7933

## COUNTRY

Benga Kasbah 024 7655 4473

## DERBY

Subhumans Old Bell 01332 343701

## EDINBURGH

Cave Painting Cabaret Voltaire

0131 220 6176

Rae Morris/Gabriel & The Hounds

Sneaky Pete's 0131 225 1757

## GLASGOW

Joan Baez Royal Concert Hall

0141 353 8000

Kevin Devine/The Goddamn Band

King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

Scroobius Pip/B Dolan The Arches

0141 565 1000

Shrag/Tunabunny Captain's Rest

0141 331 2722

## LEEDS

The Cast Of Cheers/Theme Park

Cockpit 0113 244 3446

The Kabeedles/Just Handshakes

(We're British) Nation Of

Shopkeepers 0113 203 1831

MoveOnUp HiFi Club 0113 242 7353

To Kill A King Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

## LEICESTER

Her Name Is Calla/Peter Wyeth

Central Library 0116 299 5401

Steve Hicks Musician 0116 251 0080

Wet Nuns Soundhouse 07830 425555

## LIVERPOOL

Little Dragon Kazimier 0871 230 1094

SCUM Shipping Forecast

0151 709 6901

## LONDON

Adam Cohen Union Chapel

020 7226 1686

Arabrot Shackdwell Arms

020 7249 0810

Atari Teenage Riot Garage

020 7607 1818

Bad For Lazarus/To The Bones/

Buffalo Ink MacBeth 020 7739 5095

Caan/Alex Clare XOYO 020 7729 5959

Charlene Sorala Enterprise

020 7485 2659

D-A-D Underworld 020 7482 1932

Everafter/After The Ice Half Moon

020 7274 2733

Gotye/Kimbra 02 Shepherds Bush

Empire 0870 771 2000

The Heatwave Social 020 7636 4992

Rhymn/We Show Up On Radar 229

Club 020 7631 8310

James Levy & The Blood Red

Rose/Crybabys The Lexington

020 7837 5387

Jonathan Richman Bush Hall

020 8222 6955

Keiji Haino Cafe Oto 0871 230 1094

Lady Leshurr/Clement Marfo &

The Frontline 02 Academy Islington

0870 477 2000

Laura Jeanne Nambucca

020 7272 7366

Mala/Nick Mulvey Old Queen's Head

020 7354 9993

Mary Leay Monto Water Rats

020 7837 4412

Native Tongue/Ivory Seas/

Everything By Electricity Old Blue

Last 020 7613 2478

The Neon Graveyard/Soul

Vaccination New Cross Inn

020 8692 1866

New Town Kings The Pipeline

020 7377 6860

OfeliaDorme/Utopian Love

Revival/King Of Spain Dublin Castle

020 7485 1773

Polaris Condition 93 Feet East

020 7247 6095

Portico Quartet York Hall

020 8980 2243

Pythia/The Mariana Hollow

Borderline 020 7734 5547

Rue Royale Vortex 020 7439 7250

Sharon Van Etten Rough Trade East

0207 392 7788

The Static Jacks Zigfrid Von

Underbelly 020 7613 1988

Telescopic Baby Boogaloo

020 8340 2928

Tupiniquin/Gerry Lyseight Bedroom

Bar 020 7613 5637

Wayter/St Spirit Buffalo Bar

020 7359 6191

Winchester Club/Clorinde The

Windmill

## MANCHESTER

Hooray For Earth Night And Day Cafe

0161 236 1822

I Am Austin/Glass Jungle/Sam

Smith & Company Retro Bar

0161 274 4892

Pete Williams Deaf Institute

0161 330 4019

Rod Jones & The Birthday Suit Ruby

Lounge 0161 834 1392

The Whip Academy 2 0161 832 1111

## NEWCASTLE

Eyes Set To Kill 02 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

Rammstein Metro Radio Arena

0870 707 8000

Rizzle Kicks Digital 01912 619755

## NORWICH

Band Of Skulls/Broken Hands

Waterfront 01603 632 717

## OXFORD

Labrinth 02 Academy 0870 477 2000

## PLYMOUTH

Crazy Arm/Austin Lucas/Apologetics I

Have None White Rabbit 01752 227522

## PORTSMOUTH

Dan Donnelly Cellars 0871 230 1094

Seth Lakeman Wedgewood Rooms

023 9286 3911

## READING

Decapitated/Aborted/Cyanide

Serenity Sub89 0871 230 1094

## SHEFFIELD

Melanie C 02 Academy 0870 477 2000

## STOKE

Liquid Architecture Keele University

01782 621111

## WOLVERHAMPTON

King Charles Slade Room

0870 320 7000

## YORK

Hungry Ghosts/Handmadehands/

The Violet Bones The Duchess

01904 641 413

Max Raptor/Hildamay Stereo

01904 612237



TOM OXLEY, AMY BRAMMALL, KRISTIAN YEOMANS, BEN CANNON, RICHARD JOHNSON, WILL IRELAND, DAN DENNIS



# THURSDAY

## March 1



Laura Marling,  
Corn Exchange,  
Cambridge

### ABERDEEN

**Adam Stafford/Kitchen Cynics Orchestra/Radio Trees** The Tunnels 01224 211121

### BATH

**Brother & Bones Moles** 01225 404445

### BELFAST

**Cashier No 9** Empire 028 9024 9276  
**Norma Jean** Limelight 028 9032 5942

### BIRMINGHAM

**Flatline Stereo** 02 Academy 3 0870 477 2000

**Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds/Reverend & The Makers** NIA 0121 780 4133

**Phantom Limb** Hare & Hounds 0870 264 3333

**The South** 02 Academy 2

0870 477 2000  
**Tyler Ward** HMV Institute (Library) 0844 248 5037

### BOURNEMOUTH

**O'Hooley & Tidow** Centre Stage

### BRIGHTON

**Portico Quartet** Komedia 01273 647 100

**Rachel Sennaman** Latest Music Bar 01273 687 171

**This Is The Modern World** Black Lion 01273 711 884

### BRISTOL

**Austin Lucas & The Bold Party/Crazy Arm/Apologies I Have None** Croft (Main Room) 0117 987 4144  
**Dizraeli & The Small Gods/Regime** Fleece 0117 945 0996

**In Extremis/Great Natives/Attack** Horse Louisiana 0117 926 5978

**Labrinth** 02 Academy 0870 477 2000  
**Neotropics/Deer Chicargo** Mother's Ruin 0117 925 6969

**Seth Lakeman** Trinity 01179 351 200  
**The War On Drugs/Welrd Dreams** Thekla 08713 100000

### CAMBRIDGE

**Eddie & The Hot Rods** Junction 01223 511511

**Laura Marling/Timber Timbre** Corn Exchange 01223 357851

**Patten/The Soft** Portland Arms 01223 357268

### CARDIFF

**Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash** The Gate 0871 230 1094

**Tygers Of Pan Tang** Bogiez 029 2034 1463

**XXXYY** Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

### CHELMSFORD

**The Phenomenal Handclap Band/Dead Cannons** Hooga 01245 356 811

### DUNDEE

**Who's Driving? Bear's Driving!/Yeah Detroit/Maxwell's Dead Beat** Generator 01382 229226

### EASTBOURNE

**The Viledrivers** Blue Bar 01323 431 774

### EDINBURGH

**The Cribbs/This Many Boyfriends** Liquid Room 0131 225 2564

**Emilio Largo** Sneaky Pete's 0131 225 1757

**Page 44** Studio 24 0131 558 3758

### EXETER

**Chris Smither** Phoenix 01392 667080

### GATESHEAD

**Gretchen Peters** Sage Arena 0870 703 4555

**Zadok/The Creep Vold/Latanza** Helst Three Tuns 0191 487 0666

### GLASGOW

**Cave Painting** Captain's Rest 0141 331 2722

**Hooray For Earth** Nice'n'Sleazy 0141 333 9637

**Justin Furstenfeld** Oran Mor 0141 552 9224

**Maverick Sabre** The Arches 0141 565 1000

**The Silver Seas** King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

### HERTFORD

**Suburban Dirts** Corn Exchange 01462 434 396

### LEEDS

**Eyes Set To Kill/Shadows Chasing** Ghosts The Well 0113 2440474

**Hold The Reins/Sent For Blood/Fizzler** New Roscoe 0113 246 0778

**The Jezabels** Wardrobe 0113 222 3434  
**Oxygen Thief/Mark McCabe** Royal Park Cellars 0113 274 1758

**Rizzle Kicks** University 0113 244 4600

**The Stranglers/The Popes/Mike** Marlin 02 Academy 0870 477 2000

**The Violet Bones** Milo 0113 245 7101

### LIVERPOOL

**Lafaro** Shipping Forecast 0151 709 6901

**Shrag/Tunabunny** Mello Mello 0151 707 0898

**The State Of Nige** Slaughterhouse 0151 286 2933

### LONDON

**Artnagik/Bronze Medalists** The Bowery 020 7580 3057

**Benolt Plouard** Cafe Oto 0871 230 1094

**Beth Jeans** Houghton Hoxton Square Bar & Grill 020 7613 0709

**The Blakk Reaction** Nambucca 020 7272 7366

**Bleech/Dead Wolf Club** Garage 020 7607 1818

**Damn Vandals** Zigmnd Von Underbelly 020 7613 1988

**Deadline** Boston Arms 020 7272 8153

**Fanfarlo** Scala 020 7833 2022

**The Funeral Suits/Cave Birds/The Lost Souls Club** Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358

**Hilda Bronstein** Green Note 0871 230 1094

**Jamie N Commons** Hoxton Hall 020 7739 5431

**John Digweed** XOYO 020 7729 5959

**Jonathan Richman** Tabernacle 020 7243 4343

**Lambchop/Courtney Tidwell** Barbican Centre 020 7638 8891

**Layabouts/The Tides/The Chase** Barfly 0870 907 0999

**The Listening Device** Borderline 020 7243 5547

**Melanie C** 02 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000

**Monolake/Craig Richards/Peverellist** Fabric 020 7336 8898

**New Build** Rough Trade East 0207 392 7788

**Organic/Voltage Black/Trojan** Horse Rotovator Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773

**Polaroid 85** Bedroom Bar 020 7613 5637

**Prinzhorn Dance School** 93 Feet East 020 7247 6095

**Sharon Van Etten** Cargo 0207 749 7840

**Sleben/Bird Radio/These Feathers** Have Plumes Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080

**Skream** East Village 020 7739 5173

**Sleigh Bells** Electric Ballroom 020 7485 9006

**Soko** Union Chapel 020 7226 1686

**Spector** 100 Club 020 7636 0933

**SBTRKT KOKO** 020 7388 3222

**This Is My TV/Citizens/Turnpike** Glow The Wheelbarrow

**This Is The Kit/Katie Malco/The** Liftmen The Windmill

**Toy/Underground Railroad/The** Voyeurist The Lexington 020 7837 5387

### MANCHESTER

**A41/Rat Fuel & Rock Poison** Jabez Clegg 0161 272 8612

**Bleeding Knees Club/Wet Nuns** Trof Fallowfield 0161 224 0467

**The Duke Spirit** Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392

**Gabriel & The Hounds** Night And Day Cafe 0161 236 1822

**Little Dragon** Academy 0161 832 1111

**Phantogram** The Castle 0161 237 9485

**Rammstein** Evening News Arena 0161 950 5000

**Toy Horses** Roadhouse 0161 228 1789

**MIDSOMER NORTON** Muddy Miles Wunder Bar 01761 410904

### NORWICH

**Aftershock** Brickmakers 01603 441 118

**Lady Leshurr/Clement Marfo & The** Frontline Waterfront 01603 632 717

**Monument Valley** Bicycle Shop 01603 625 777

### NOTTINGHAM

**The Cast Of Cheers/Theme Park/A** lright The Captain Bodega Social Club 08713 100000

**Decapitated/Aborted/Cyanide** Serenity Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484

### OXFORD

**Allo Darlin'** Cellar 01865 244 761

**Band Of Skulls** 02 Academy 0870 477 2000

**PORTSMOUTH** Gabrielle Aplin Cellars 0871 230 1094

### PRESTON

**Ellen & The Escapades** Mad Ferret 07919 896 636

### READING

**Copper Garden/The Backbeat** Magnets Face Bar 0118 956 8188

**The Selecter** Sub89 0871 230 1094

### SHEFFIELD

**Johnny Foreigner** Harley 0114 275 2288

### SOUTHAMPTON

**InMe/Lost Alone** Talking Heads 023 8055 5899

### STOKE ON TRENT

**King Charles** Sugarmill 01782 214 991

### ST ALBANS

**Krakatoa/The Vex** Horn 01727 853 143

### WOLVERHAMPTON

**Cara Dillon** Robin 2 01902 497860

**To Kill A King** Slade Room 0870 320 7000

### WREXHAM

**Max Raptor/Hildamay** Central Station 01978 358780

### YORK

**The Eden House/Berlin** Black The Duchess 01904 641 413

**The Real People/The Sonnets/Red** Chevrons Fibbers 01904 651 250

# FRIDAY

## March 2



This Many  
Boyfriends,  
Concorde 2,  
Brighton

### BELFAST

**The Leisure Society** Black Box 00 35391 566511

### BIRMINGHAM

**Black Shark/Coronation Gypsies** Sunflower Lounge 0121 632 6756

**Laura Marling/Timber Timbre/Pete** Roe Symphony Hall 0121 780 3333

**Masters In France** The Ballroom 0121 448 0797

**Melanie C** HMV Institute 0844 248 5037

**The Silver Seas** 02 Academy 3 0870 477 2000

### BOURNEMOUTH

**The Defiled** Sound Circus 01202 551802

**The Wanted** International Centre 0870 111 3000

### BRIGHTON

**British Sea Power** The Haunt 01273 770 847

**Citizens/Byron/The Milk** Green Door Store 07894 267 053

**Crazy Arm/Apologies I Have None** The Hydrant 01273 608 313

**The Cribbs/This Many Boyfriends** Concorde 2 01273 673 311

**Jamie N Commons** Prince Albert 01273 730 4999

**Spotlight Kid** Sticky Mike's Frog Bar 01273 749 465

**WTF** White Rabbit 01273 677 655

### BRISTOL

**Bleech/Call The Doctor/Annette** Berlin Louisiana 0117 926 5978

**Boca 45/John Parish/Gary Smith** Thunderbolt 07791 319 614

**Decapitated/Aborted/Cyanide** Serenity Fleece 0117 945 0996

**Fay Hield** Trlo Colston Hall 0117 922 3683

**Ikonika** Start The Bus 0117 930 4370

**Jaguar Skills** Thekla 08713 100000

**Little Dragon** 02 Academy 0870 477 2000

**Madeleine Black/Real Dead Bodies/The** Divebomb Revolution Croft (Main Room) 0117 987 4144

**Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash** The Tunnels 0117 929 9008

**NLF3** The Cooler 0117 945 0999

**Rich Hughes** Mother's Ruin 0117 925 6969

**Seth Troxler** Motion Ramp Park 01179 723111

**Sons Of The Sand/Deaf Horse/K** lunk Croft (Front Bar) 0117 987 4144

**Tiny Dragons/Ayre Point/Mako & The Hawk** Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221

### CAMBRIDGE

**Monument Valley** Corner House 01223 352 047

### CARDIFF

**Labrinth** University 029 2023 0130

**Peter Brunnell** Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

**Protest The Hero/Long Distance** Calling/Blood Command University 029 2023 0130

**The Selecter** Bogiez 029 2034 1463

**Tyrannosaurus Alan/Anti Vigilante/Broken** Nose The Full Moon

### CARLISLE

**Miles Hunt/I Am Spartacus/I Dine** With Wolves Brickyard 01228 512 220

### CHELMSFORD

**Esser/Wild Combination** Hooga 01245 356 811

### COVENTRY

**Funtcase** Carey's Bar 07714 105091

**Max Raptor/Hildamay** Kasbah 024 7655 4473

### DERBY

**The Hype Theory** The Vic Inn 01332 74 00 91

### DERRY

**Cashier No 9** An Culturlann 028 7126 4132

### DUNDEE

**Optimo** Reading Rooms 01382 228496

### EDINBURGH

**Karnataka** Queens Hall 0131 668 2019

**The Nature Boys** Cabaret Voltaire 0131 220 6176

**Netsky** Bongo Club 0131 558 7604

**Wet Nuns/Fat Goth/Hagana** Electric Circus 0131 226 4224



# FRIDAY

March 2



◀ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 59

**Eyes Set To Kill** O2 Academy 2  
0870 477 2000  
**Joan Baez** Philharmonic Hall  
0871 230 1094

**LONDON**  
**Andrew Weatherall** Plastic People  
020 7739 6471  
**Anterior** Underworld 020 7482 1932  
**The Arcadian Kicks** 93 Feet East  
020 7247 6095  
**Austin Lucas** The Windmill  
**The Din Boogaloo** 020 8340 2928  
**Face Down/The Marmozets** Scala  
020 7833 2022  
**Gentleman Duke** Bedroom Bar  
020 7613 5637  
**The Glassguns** 100 Club 020 7636 0933  
**Grouper** Swiss Church 020 7836 1418  
**The Joker & The Thief/The Kindling**  
Hackney Attic 0871 902 5734  
**Jonathan Richman** Union Chapel  
020 7226 1686  
**Knights Of The Realm** Barfly  
0870 907 0999  
**Lindl Ortega** Borderline 020 7734 5547  
**Lola Colt** Heroes Bar 020 7485 6040  
**Louellen/Canvas Wall/Elephant 12**  
Nambucca 020 7272 7366  
**Matt Muir** Cavendish Arms  
0207 627 0698  
**Newtown Neurotics** Boston Arms  
020 7272 8153  
**The Phoenix Brothers/Wilson/Thom**  
Cross Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773  
**Saltwater Sam** Vortex Jazz Club  
020 7254 6516  
**Sluge Sluge** Sputnik/Noblesse  
Oblige Purple Turtle 020 7383 4976  
**Simple Minds** Roundhouse  
020 7482 7318  
**Snowboy/Healer Selecta** Madame  
Jojo's 020 7734 2473  
**The South** O2 Academy Islington  
0870 477 2000  
**Tees/Samiyam** Village Underground  
020 7422 7505  
**This Is The Kit** Manero's Bar  
**The Wolfmen** Ginglik 020 8749 2310  
**14th/Devin** Club NME @ Koko  
0870 4325527

## MANCHESTER

**Gotye** HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355  
**The Imogen Styles/Hollywood Or**  
**Bust** Dry Bar 0161 236 5920  
**Indigo Moho** Live 0161 834 8180  
**The Jezabels** Ruby Lounge  
0161 834 1392  
**The Kaheedies** Deaf Institute  
0161 330 4019  
**Momus** IABF 0161 235 0776  
**The Phenomenal Handclap Band**  
Night And Day Cafe 0161 236 1822  
**Rizzle Kicks** Academy 0161 832 1111  
**Sleigh Bells** Sound Control  
0161 236 0340  
**Soko** Islington Mill 0871 230 1094  
**Willis Earl Beal** Trof Fallowfield  
0161 224 0467

## MILTON KEYNES

**InMe/LostAlone** Craufurd Arms  
01908 313 864

## NEWCASTLE

**Alr To Achilles/So What Robot** Cluny  
0191 230 4474  
**Crows** Black Bull 0191 414 2846

## NORWICH

**Allo Darlin'/Tigercats** Arts Centre  
01603 660 352

**Dead Ends** Brickmakers

01603 441 118

**Tattooed Cow/Save Ferris**

Brickmakers 01603 441 118

## NOTTINGHAM

**Bongo Chilli** Spanky Van Dykes  
0115 924 3730

**Hookworms** Britannia Inn

0115 941 1532

**Joy Orbison/Scuba** Stealth

08713 100000

**Rammstein** Capital FM Arena

0115 948 4526

**Rebel Soul** Collective Maze

0115 947 5650

**Sirag** Chameleon 0115 9505097

## OXFORD

**Fanfario** Bullingdon Arms

01865 244516

**Seth Lakeman** O2 Academy

0870 477 2000

## Port Isaac

**Louis Elliot & The Embers** Golden Lion

01208 880336

## PONTYPOOL

**Scabbes** James Hog & Hosper

07813 153 647

## POOLE

**Arun Ghosh** Lighthouse 01202 685222

## PRESTON

**Teeth Of The Sea** Continental

01772 499 425

## SHEFFIELD

**Mimoths** Bungalows & Bears

0114 279 2901

**Norma Jean/The Chariot/Dead &**

**Divine** Corporation 0114 276 0262

## SOUTHAMPTON

**Musical Youth** Joiners 023 8022 5612

## STOKE ON TRENT

**The Get Alongs** Sugarmill

01782 214 991

## TUNBRIDGE WELLS

**Planos** Become The Teeth/Bastions

The Forum 0871 277 7101

## WAKEFIELD

**The Unrangs** The Hop 0871 230 1094

## WREXHAM

**Doppelgangers** Central Station

01978 358780

## YORK

**Zico Chain/Silvertone/IHeart**

Fibbers 01904 651 250

## BATH

**The Motorcity Daredevils** Komedia  
0845 293 8480

## BELFAST

**The Answer** Queens University

028 9097 3106

**Bloody Kisses** Spring & Airbrake

028 9032 5968

## BIRMINGHAM

**The Cast Of Cheers/Theme Park**

HMV Institute (Temple) 0844 248 5037

**Lucid Uprising/This Elegant Chaos/**

**DB10** Eddie's Rock Club 0121 643 2093

**Nick Lowe** Town Hall 0121 780 3333

**Oxygen Thief/Mark McCabe** Bright

House 0121 616 1731

**Page 44** O2 Academy 3

0870 477 2000

**The Phenomenal Handclap Band**

Hare & Hounds 0870 264 3333

**Protest The Hero/Long Distance**

**Calling/Blood Command** O2

Academy 3 0870 477 2000

**Rozalla** Rainbow 0121 772 8174

## ROBHTON

**Allo Darlin'** The Haunt 01273 770 847

**DRUGS** The Hope 01273 723 568

**Gareth Stephens** Fishbowl

01273 777 505

**Haight-Ashbury** Green Door Store

07894 267 053

**The Jezabels** Audio 01273 624343

**The Mixer Men** White Rabbit

01273 677 655

**Phantom Limb** Prince Albert

01273 730 499

**Sleigh Bells** Concorde 2 01273 673 311

**Van Morrison** Dome 01273 709709

## BRISTOL

**Attack Attack!/Heights/Calore** The

Cooler 0117 945 0999

**Benga/Youngman/Zinc** Motion

Ramp Park 01179 723111

**Earth/Mount Eerie/O Paon**

Arncliffe 0117 929 9191

**Laura Marling/Timber** Timbre

Colston Hall 0117 922 3683

**Mad Dog McRea** TheKla

08713 100000

**Masters In France/Goldtrip/Dead**

**Lieutenant** Croft (Main Room)

0117 987 4144

**The Selector** Fleece 0117 945 0996

**Sharon Jones & The Dap Kings** O2

Academy 0870 477 2000

**Silent Empathy/Surface** The

**Dissent/Witness** The Darkness

Croft (Front Bar) 0117 987 4144

**Spotlight Kid** Louisiana

0117 926 5978

**This Is The Kit/Pocket Penguin/**

**Roz!** Plain Colston Hall 0117 922 3683

## CAMBRIDGE

**Tellison** Portland Arms 01223 357268

## CARDIFF

**Ahab Arts** Institute 0871 230 1094

**Jaguar Skills** Glam 029 2022 9311

**Mike TV** 10 Feet Tall 02920 228883

**Supacell** Undertone 029 2022 8883

**Truckers Of Husk** The Globe

07738 983947

## CARLISLE

**Discharge** Brickyard 01228 512 220

## COVENTRY

**Bumski** Carey's Bar 07714 105091

## DERBY

**Johnny Foreigner** The Vic Inn

01332 74 00 91

## DUNDEE

**Stoned Pony/Foxbeef** Doghouse

01382 227080

# SATURDAY

March 3

**Totally Wired** Beat Generator

01382 229226

## EDINBURGH

**Anti Nowhere League** Citrus Club

0131 622 7086

**The Imagineers** Sneaky Pete's

0131 225 1757

**John Digweed** Liquid Room

0131 225 2564

**Little Doses** Cabaret Voltaire

0131 220 6176

## GLASGOW

**Capstin Pole/Balabushka/Sunflower**

**Tuesdays** O2 ABC 0141 204 5151

**The Duke Spirit** King Tut's Wah Wah

Hut 0141 221 5279

**Gregori Klosman** The Arches

0141 565 1000

**The Risk/The Switch/Forever**

**Rituals** Garage 0141 332 1120

**Soko Nice'n'Sleazy** 0141 333 9637

**The Strangers/The Popes/Mike**

**Marilyn** O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

**Wet Nuns** Berkeley Suite

## LEEDS

**Action Beat/Ashtray Navigations/**

**Azores** Brudenell Social Club

0113 243 5866

**Benson/Little** Victorles Cockpit

0113 244 3446



**The Crips/This Many Boyfriends**

Metropolitan University 0113 283 2600

**Straight Up** Wire Club 0870 444 4018

**Toy Horses** Empire 01132 420868

**Willis Earl Beal/AA Bondy** Nation Of

Shopkeepers 0113 203 1831

## LEICESTER

**By The Rivers/Bluebird Parade/**

**Punk's Not Dead** Donkey

0116 270 5042

**Crazy Arm/Apologies I Have None/**

**Great Cynics** Firebug 0116 255 1228

**The Watch** Musician 0116 251 0080

## LIVERPOOL

**Calvin Harris** Nation 0151 709 9172

**Public Overload/Fallen Paradise/**

**The Project** O2 Academy 2

0870 477 2000

## LONDON

**Alabama 3** Jamm 020 7274 5537

**The August September/Howl**

**On Vinyl/Kintillo** The Shoreditch

020 7033 0085

**Black Diamond** Bay Barfly

0870 907 0999

**Blue Vells** Heroes Bar 020 7485 6040

**The Bohemians** O2 Academy Islington

0870 477 2000

**Bruce Lok** Purple Turtle

020 7383 4976

**Christmas Club/Four Dead In Ohio**

Borderline 020 7734 5547

**Crystal Fighters/LCMDF/Is Tropical**

Queen Of Hoxton 020 7422 0958

**Doc Brown** Union Chapel

020 7226 1686

**DC Fontana** 100 Club 020 7636 0933

**Fear No Fish/The Kandy Kane Kids/**

**Jelly Fiends** Nambucca 020 7272 7366

**Foreign Legion** Grosvenor

0871 223 7992

**Inner Terrestrials** Boston Arms







## THIS WEEK IN 1963

BOBBY FINDS FAME, BEATLES GO TOP, CLIFF TAKES A TRIP

CLIFF ★ SHADOWS ★ VEE ★ EVERLYS

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**JOHNNY CYMBAL**  
WALKING 4-4



CLIFF RICHARD is on top of our world charts, having taken to the top of the charts with "Summer Holiday". He also still remains top of the charts in the USA (see page 10).

BOBBY VEE has returned to the top of the charts with "The Night Has A Thousand Eyes". The director of "Buddy Holly's" "The Great Escape" has also been in the charts (see page 10).

ELVIS PRESLEY has made the charts again with "Love Me Tender". He has also been in the charts with "It's Now or Never" (see page 10).

Philips win again!

**SAY WONDERFUL THINGS**  
328 874 BF  
BRITAIN'S ENTRY FOR THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST

RONNIE CARROLL

TOMMY ROE (the new) ADMITS HE COPIED HOLLY



## TOMMY GUNS

Another disciple of Buddy Holly, Tommy Roe is due to arrive in Britain for the first time this weekend. He has attracted much criticism for the similarity of his act to his hero's, but is fairly brazen when asked about it. "I know I sound like Buddy," he says, "and I do copy him. But he was a great performer and one of my favourites. He was a great influence on my career and although we never met, I loved his music and have nearly every record he ever made."

## GETTING FABBER

On the January 11 of this year, The Beatles released their second ever single 'Please Please Me' and now, not for the first time, it is sitting at the top of the NME Singles Chart. The next, 'From Me To You', is a month off, and manager Brian Epstein has booked an "all Merseyside" ballroom package tour for them to headline, with Gerry And The Pacemakers and The Big Three supporting. "The 'Liverpoolians' will play all the major cities starting Thursday," runs the report.

## VEE WILL ROCK YOU

**T**he two faces on the left and right of this week's cover, you will know. But the guy in the middle?

The career of Bobby Vee (born Robert Thomas Velline) was born out of tragedy. A plane crash early on the morning of February 3, 1959 killed Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and JP 'The Big Bopper' Richardson, the trio of rock'n'roll pioneers who together made up the 'Winter Dance Party' which was set to appear that night in Moorhead, Minnesota. Fifteen year-old Holly obsessive Velline heard a plea on the radio for local talent to fill in at the event, and hastily assembled a band. Against the odds, the performance was a success, and by the end of the year Vee has a hit entitled 'Suzie Baby'.

A dozen or so more hits later – including the US Number One 'Take Good Care Of My Baby' in '61 – Vee is enjoying his biggest UK hit to date, with 'The Night Has A Thousand Eyes'. He is also readying a tribute album to his hero, entitled 'I Remember Buddy Holly'. "I wasn't sure it was the proper thing to do," he says. "But I have never forgotten Buddy Holly and his influence on my singing style and my career."

In another strange twist of fate in 1959, Bobby Vee and his primitive band would hire a piano player who went by the name of Elston Gunn. Given that he could only play in one key and didn't own his own piano, the arrangement did not work out. Except for "Elston" – real name Robert Zimmerman – who would soon ditch piano for the acoustic guitar, move to New York and change his name to Bob Dylan.

## ALSO IN THE ISSUE THAT WEEK

• It's reported that Elvis Presley has signed a new recording contract with RCA-Victor that will "guarantee him more than £1 million".

• Billy Fury's manager, Larry Parnes, announces that his charge will play a free performance to make up for dropping out of a BBC Royal Albert Hall concert at the last minute due to "contractual difficulties". He asks for fans to send their ticket stubs to his office.

• An article about Cliff Richard by Andy Gray is headlined "WE'VE NEVER HAD HIM SO GOOD!" He also has the best-selling LP with 'Summer Holiday'.

• The best-selling pop record in the US is The Four Seasons' 'Walk Like A Man'.

NME

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### CLUES ACROSS

- 1+5A Kills oneself (3-4-7)  
 9 Brighton lads who might have led the high life, but still dealt with 'Other People's Problems': The \_\_\_\_\_ (5-4)  
 10+12D "The time to hesitate is through", 1967 (5-2-4)  
 11 Manchester duo of Theo Hutchcraft and Adam Anderson (5)  
 12 US group who got a 'Common Burn' from making their first recordings in 15 years (5-4)  
 13+26A Finally it's an Etta James' song (2-4)  
 14+39A Turned off by lyric from this band (5-5)  
 15 Legendary rock'n'roll radio DJ namechecked by Ramones with "Do you remember \_\_\_\_\_ The K, Alan Freed and high energy, it's the end, the end of the '70s" (6)  
 19 Closely related to an album by The Black Keys (8)  
 22 (See 4 down)  
 23 "I'm not gonna spend 10 weeks, have everyone think I'm on the mend", 2006 (5)  
 24+37A He's at wrong turning with Culture Club (3 3 4)  
 26 (See 13 across)  
 29 Simple Minds singer goes into a darker room (4)  
 31 It's alright to make a move for an American band (2-2)  
 32 The de facto leader of Wu-Tang Clan (3)  
 34 Without requiring a song from Alfie (2-4)  
 35 It's a race to include Fleetwood Mac number (4)  
 37 (See 24 across)  
 38 \_\_\_\_\_ Thayer of Soundgarden or \_\_\_\_\_ Deal of Pixies (3)  
 39 (See 14 across)

### CLUES DOWN

- 1+18D Pulled Apart By Horses, and so it's difficult to remain attached (5-4)  
 2 "Stop! I said it's happening again. We're all wasting away", 2006 (6)  
 3 Rock band that I hear most, perhaps (9)  
 4+22A Twang play with double the passion on this number (3-6)  
 5 Band that won the Mercury Music Prize in 1998 with their debut album 'Bring It On' (5)  
 6 "Looking from a window above, it's like a story of love, can you hear me", 1982 (4-3)  
 7 Celebrity status of Alex Chilton while with this band (3-4)  
 8+21D Their singles include 'Juggernauts' and 'Destabilise' (5-7)

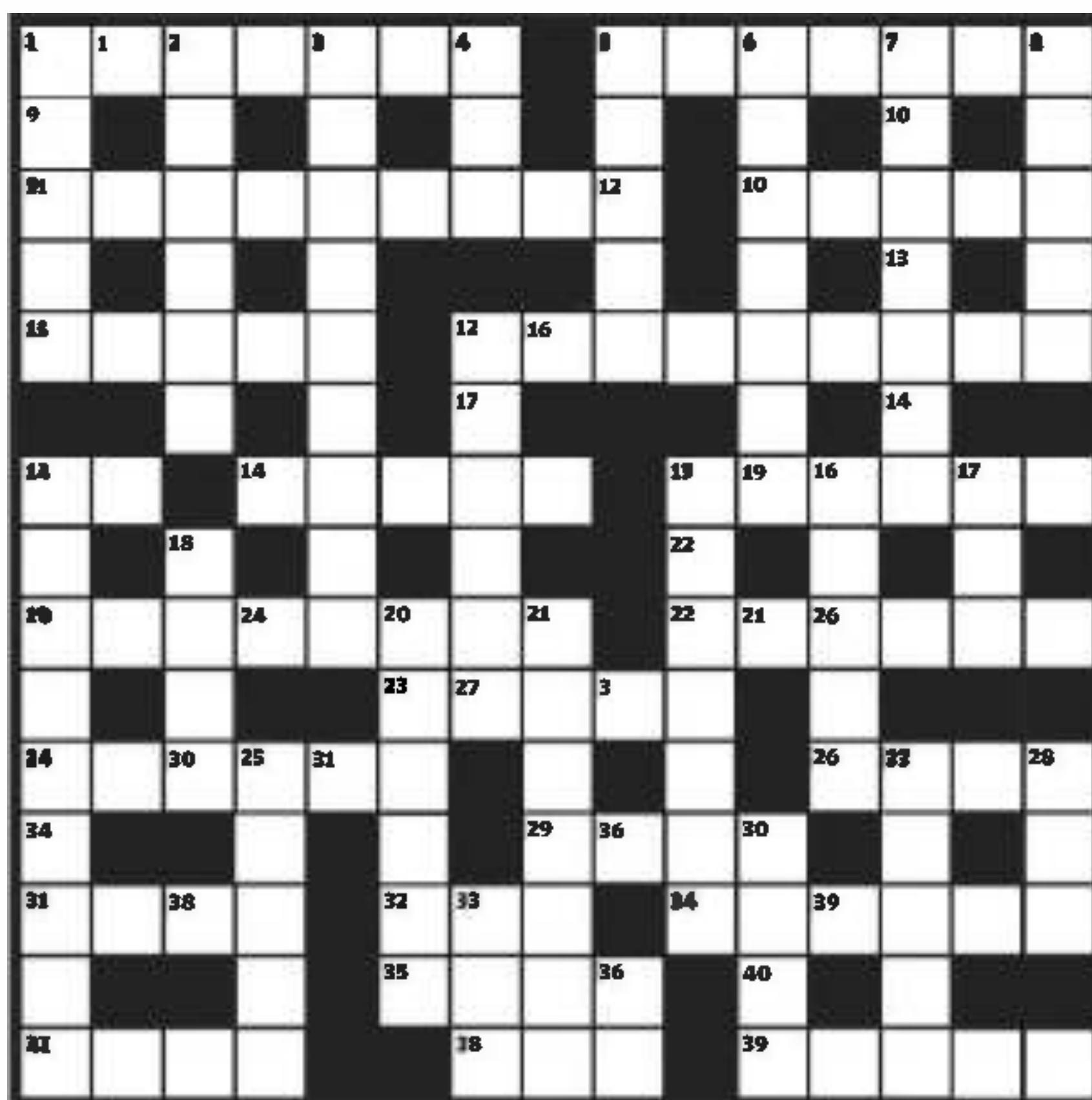
- 12 (See 10 across)  
 13 Connection between Wild Beasts and Fleetwood Mac (9)  
 15 'Send in the Boys' to form a band in Sheffield (7)  
 16 Manic Street Preachers' disc goes for just half a revolution (5)  
 17 They have just embarked on 'Le Voyage Dans La Lune' (3)  
 18 (See 1 down)  
 20 Glaswegians mistakenly telling us to 'Have Some Faith In Magic' (6)  
 21 (See 8 down)  
 25 "On the \_\_\_\_\_ day of the \_\_\_\_\_ week I used the \_\_\_\_\_ method with the \_\_\_\_\_ technique", Depeche Mode (5)  
 27 The Bravery in the end get bass player from Jane's Addiction (5)  
 28 Just a small amount coming from grunge band in Seattle (3)  
 30 'Shotgun Wedding' man spotted in a Rolls Royce (3-1)  
 33 He's banged the drums for Oasis (3)  
 36 Examples include an album by Wilco (1-1)

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First correct one out of the hat wins a bag of CDs, T-shirts and books!

### FEBRUARY 11 ANSWERS

- ANSWERS ACROSS**  
 1 Given To The Wild, 9 Lonely Boy, 10+29A Radio Birdman, 11 Eyes Open, 13 Cavern, 14 Bite, 15+26A Oh Land, 18+22A Love My Way, 19 One Way, 21 Snot, 25 RAR, 32+24A Ultra Nate, 34 Newsom  
**ANSWERS DOWN**  
 1 Golden Brown, 2 Vincent, 3+16A Nelson Mandela, 4 Orb, 5+35A Hey Dude, 6 Warpaint, 7 Lady Eleanor, 12+36A Echo Beach, 15 Olympian, 16 Mega, 17 Aftermath, 20 Ester, 23 W.F.L., 27 Arse, 28 Dumb, 29 Bad, 30 Die, 31+8D New Born, 33 Tea



## COLLECTORS' CORNER

### RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

Call yourself a superfan? Here are the gems that no Rage Against The Machine obsessive should be without



### RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE - DEMO (1991)



This 12-track cassette was recorded before Rage Against The Machine even played their first show. It was subsequently made available at the band's early live performances, and is reputed to have sold around 5,000 copies. The success of the demo led to the group's eventual deal with Epic Records - where they would record four albums over eight years.

**Need To Know:** Three of the songs included on tape have never seen an official release.

### LIVE & RARE (1993)



As the name suggests, a compilation of rare and live material by the band, originally released in Japan only. The tracklisting includes covers of songs by NWA ('Fuck Tha Police') and Bruce Springsteen ('The Ghost of Tom Joad'), as well as a recording of a guest appearance by beat poet Allen Ginsberg with the band in Detroit in 1993.

**Need To Know:** Two songs on the tracklisting - 'Darkness' and 'Clear The Lane' - originally featured on the 1991 demo.

### ONE DAY AS A LION - ONE DAY AS A LION (2001)



Five-track eponymous debut EP from Rage frontman Zack de la Rocha's new band with former Mars Volta drummer Jon Theodore. The record was released while the Rage reunion was in full swing, and has yet to be followed up.

However, Theodore said last year in an interview that the band's debut album will be released in the near future.

**Need To Know:** The EP reached Number 28 on the US Billboard Albums Chart.

### STREET SWEEPER SOCIAL CLUB (2000)



Debut release from the rap-rock band formed by Rage guitarist Tom Morello and his regular onstage collaborator Boots Riley of Californian hip-hop group The Coup. The politically charged record consists of what Morello referred to as "revolutionary party jams" - and includes covers of LL Cool J's 'Mama Said Knock You Out' and MIA's 'Paper Planes'.

**Need To Know:** The band was originally known merely as Street Sweeper, but changed their name in 2009.



# FANMAIL

YOU GET IN TOUCH, WE RESPOND, THINGS GET OUT OF HAND

Edited by Ailbhe Malone



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## The Big Issue

What everyone's talking about this week



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### LETTER OF THE WEEK

## THIS IS A HIGH

From: Jez  
To: NME

Well, first and foremost I just wanna SCREEEEEEAAAAAMMM! So, so, SO bloody excited about Blur's return. I missed out on their gigs in 2009 because of a combination of being too young, too poor and too far away from the action. But now I'm at uni with a nice little loan in the bank account, there will be no stopping me! What a brilliant way of celebrating Britishness to tie in with the Olympics too – the line-up may be old bands, but I think the three selected show how diverse, exciting and boundary-pushing our nation has been in the past 30 years, without needlessly turning things into a pointless, smarmy nostalgia-fest like I expected it to be. Blur, The Specials and New Order will be utterly joyous – the perfect way to end the games.

#### NME's response...

Too bloody right, Jez. And we're saying that even after witnessing the rather pished show the guys put on for their Brits performance. Blimey Damon! Never knew a guy could sweat quite that much, squire. To get back to the original point though, the Olympics

closing show is indeed a whopper of a line-up. You've got three of the most dependable reunion acts on one bill there – how could it fail?! These guys are pros when it comes to doing what's needed for such occasions: playing the goddamn hits and playing

them well. And I have no doubt they'll pull it out of the bag in August. A couple of things though – wouldn't it be AMAZING to add a few more acts to the bill who actually represent the rest of the UK? Another Manics send-off, perhaps? Biffy Clyro premiering their

new album? And some newer bands wouldn't exactly go amiss either – Tribes and WU LYF to open proceedings, anybody? – AM

Winners should email [letters@NME.COM](mailto:letters@NME.COM) to claim their limited-edition Sonic Editions print

### BRIT SANDWICH

From: Adam

To: NME

I have been a reader of your magazine for years but have never been compelled to write in. However, I feel it necessary after viewing the terrible performance at last night's Brit Awards. That's right, I'm talking about you, ITV. How you can spend two whole hours building up to "the biggest award of the night – Album Of The Year" and then stumble right at the crucial moment and cut off the winner's speech? It was beyond laughable and an insult to the hugely talented Adele. This in turn caused Outstanding Contribution To Music winners Blur to take to the stage to a chorus of boos and hisses ruining a special moment in their career as well. On the subject of Blur's performance, my impression from various comments around social media is that there was a feeling they were a bit rubbish. I would urge their detractors to consider how difficult a gig this would be. Playing to a room full of Jessie J and One Direction fans, most of whom were probably not born when Blur picked up their previous awards, they struggled with a disinterested crowd much as One Direction might if headlining Glastonbury. It's a shame they didn't play 'Out Of Time' which would have perfectly encapsulated both the injustice done to Adele and the dubious honour being bestowed upon them; the gift of obscurity among a stadium full of indifferent Ollie Murs fans. I for one am still pinning all hope on them delivering a new

album this year which on the strength of 'Under The Westway' and 'Fool's Day' would represent another stage in one of the most inventive bands our country has ever produced.

From: NME

To: Adam

All fair points, Adam. The decision to cut off Adele was a calamitous one without a shadow of a doubt, and I really felt for both her and James Corden (not often you find yourself saying that, is it?). Did you really expect any different though? At the very least I think we'll look back and shudder with mild amusement about it – sure, it was a massive mistake, but the look on Corden's face? Priceless! Fuck the actual winners and losers – it's moments like that which make these kind of affairs so worthwhile (see also: Jarvis'n'Jacko, Ryan Jarman impaling himself on a beer bottle, Winslet crying for England). Oh, and while we're here, we're with you 100 per cent on that new Blur album – how goddamn brilliant is 'Under The Westway'?! Proof the chaps have most definitely still got it... – AM

### DON'T BELIEVE THE STRIPE

From: Rob

To: NME

Since The White Stripes split last February I've always had the feeling that Jack and Meg had been planning it for a while. I first thought this when I realised they made the announcement on the 33rd day of the year – knowing Jack, this surely can't have been coincidence. Also they said they wanted to play every last province and territory in Canada and any



States they hadn't previously played in America before they did anything else, but it just so happened this turned out to be the last thing they did. I think they treated this as a 'farewell tour'. Another big hint that the break up was premeditated can be found in the album artwork of their final studio album, 'Icky Thump', where at the back of the booklet they thank friends and family and they even thank all the fans and say "you're welcome". I also noticed that 'Effect And Cause', the last song on 'Icky Thump', lasts for exactly three minutes: Jack White's favourite number. He had to do it at some point! After taking all of this into consideration, my mind is made up that The White Stripes had been pondering their split before they even released what turned out to be their last album.

**From: NME**

**To: Rob**

Rob, you're like an indie Sherlock. May we point you in the direction of Google and urge you to type in the words "Paul is dead", perhaps? Speaking of which, have you ever heard the one about Lennon being obsessed with the number nine? Or all the 666 palaver with Iron Maiden? Yeah... perhaps you're onto something



## STALKER

**From: David**

**To: NME**

"I follow Pete and his band(s) everywhere. I'm a Libertine – even though I'm wearing a Rihanna T-shirt here. Ha ha!"

here! Although, hold on – what the fuck are we talking about?! Jack White's BACK, man! Sod the pseudo bullshit, sod the Stripes and get ready for the return of the big guy. 'Blunderbuss' is with us in a couple of months, this is no time for over-analysis –AM

## SKI-VILIZATION

**From: Jessica**

**To: NME**

Saw Justice live as part of the NME Awards Shows in Manchester and they were (cue French accent) INCREDIBLE! Highlight of the gig had to be headbanging to 'Canon'. Not only was I lucky enough to be at the barrier but I got to meet Gaspard Augé afterwards and tell him that I liked his ski outfit in French. No, he wasn't wearing a ski outfit!

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The greasy 24-year-old is now truly in the public domain after winning three Grammys, so we may as well focus on the positives...

### 1. TUMBLR LOVES HIM

Between 'Girls That Look Like Skrillex', and 'Cooking With Skrillex' he's a one-man meme factory.

### 2. HE WAS PART OF THE BEST BRITISH METALCORE ALBUM OF LAST YEAR

Skrillex did the programming and backing vocals for Bring Me The Horizon's 'There Is A Hell, Believe Me I've Seen It'.

### Best of the responses...

His music is like Optimus Prime taking a dump  
**Mark Dean**

The truth is that no-one can give a legitimate

# Web Slings

## The highlight of this week's NME.COM blogs WHY IT'S OK TO STOP HATING SKRILLEX NOW

There Is A Heaven, Let's Keep It A Secret'. You know, the one that was overlooked at the Barclaycard Mercury Prize 2011.

### 3. THIS ELLIE GOULDING TRACK

Think Skrillex isn't capable of subtlety? Check out this collaboration he did with Ellie Goulding on 'Bangarang' (his latest EP). Glitchy rather than kitchen-sinky, it holds back on his signature drops in favour of shimmering electro.

### 4. KORN LIKE HIM

Skrillex was called in to produce the new Korn record. "His production, his sound, and our guitars



and what we do with it, it just worked, and that's what set the ball rolling," Korn frontman Jonathan Davis said. "Initially we were just thinking about doing a couple of songs, an EP,

[but we] kept rolling with it more and more with different DJs, and it just turned into this record that took on a life of its own."

Read Ailbhe's article in full at [NME.COM/blogs](http://NME.COM/blogs)

reason why he sucks. I've heard people say he sucks because he's 'Americanizing' electronic music, which is offensive.  
**Sanmi Adegboyega**

Skrillex brings something rather different to the mainstream market. Better greasy-haired DJs than yet another 16-year-old tartlet.  
**Genna Altai**

You've got to be kidding.  
**Tom Sandwell**

This article has just made me hate him even more.  
**Laine Tisdall**

**To: Jessica**

**From: NME**

It would seem that the only logical way to save face in this situation would be to rent out a ski lodge, hire Justice to play at it, and then organise an encounter with Gaspard in which you compliment his ski-wear, this time in the correct context. Failing that, you could always work a bit harder in your French class and learn some phrases that you can use outside Val d'Isère – AM

## LIP-HOP, ANYONE?

**From: Ethan**

**To: NME**

It might just be me, but when I listen to Lana Del Rey, I think of Portishead. Both artists create very atmospheric songs, using almost hip-hop beats and soothing vocals to create rich, dense sounds. While very similar, they most certainly do have their differences. Portishead's

sound is fairly minimal, while Lana's (while not over produced) is a lot more blown-up. Although I doubt this will get much recognition (you must get lots of letters), I do hope I have stated my point.

**From: NME**

**To: Ethan**

Now you've mentioned it, we can definitely see the overlap between Portishead and Lana. Also, we'd say that a 'Glory Box'/'Blue Jeans' mash-up would sound mega. Get on it! – AM

## TWEET NOTHINGS

**From: Neil**

**To: NME**

The death of Whitney Houston is tragic in the way she shared a lot of similarities with Amy Winehouse. They might have been of different generations and styles but both had voices that could make the hairs on the back

of your neck stand to attention. And now they're both gone, the world is robbed of a pair of great talents. I can't be bothered with the fake social network grief, with comments like "Amy and Whitney will be singing together in heaven". It implies that their passing is an achievement, when instead we should be digging out their old records to mourn their deaths and celebrate their legacy. Although thanks to some jiggery-pokery and iTunes, I bet it's not long before the Amy/Whitney duet is in the charts.

**From: NME**

**To: Neil**

Well said, Neil. After Amy's death, there was an outcry for addiction to be better understood as an illness, rather than a lifestyle choice. The profits from 'Lioness: Hidden Treasures' – Amy's final album – went to fund the

Amy Winehouse Foundation. The final piece of music that Whitney Houston recorded was a version of gospel classic 'His Eye Is On The Sparrow' will feature in her posthumous film *Sparkle*. Perhaps the track could be released as a charity single in a similar vein. The music should always be the focal point rather than the tabloid details – AM



## STALKER

**From: Hannan**

**To: NME**

"Me and a mate with Harry McVeigh from White Lies. We met him and the rest of the band after an intimate show"



# DOES ROCK'N'ROLL KILL BRAINCELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A LIFETIME OF ABUSE

*This Week*

## ROU REYNOLDS ENTER SHIKARI

### QUESTION 1

The original version of 'Anything Can Happen In The Next Half Hour' featured a sample from '60s TV series Stingray. What is the name of Stingray's pilot?

"Ah. You've got me."

**Wrong.** *Troy Tempest. Did he complain about being sampled, is that why you left him off the second version?*

"No. The story is, we just forgot!"

### QUESTION 2

What is the name of the newsreader you play in the video for 'Arguing With Thermometers'?

"Phillis McClelland. It was filmed in a really bad area in the Bronx and there was me dressed up as an '80s-style Anchorman character."

**Correct**



### QUESTION 3

Enter Shikari are drawn as cartoons on one of your T-shirts (right), but what are you called on the website?

"We're chipmunks. But I don't know what we're called."

**Wrong.** *Rou & The Shikmunks*

### QUESTION 4

You were the second unsigned band to sell out the now-closed London Astoria (right), in 2006. Who did it before you?

"The Darkness."

**Correct**

### QUESTION 5

When did you win the NME John Peel Award for Musical Innovation (right)?

"2007?"

**Correct**



### QUESTION 6

How many physical copies of your debut single 'Mothership' were released on CD in 2007?

"Hmm... I've no idea. Is this a trick question? Was 'Mothership' download only?"

**Wrong.** *There were 100 copies. "That sounds about right."*

### QUESTION 7

How many Myspace friends did you have just before you'd released your debut album, in 2007?

"No idea."

**Wrong.** *86,500*

"It's funny talking about Myspace now because it's completely dead. But that was an age when everyone who had seen us live or heard us talked about logged on to it, and everything you needed to know about us was there. It was a handy tool."

### QUESTION 8

On which song do you sing the following? "Hop right in/Take a look around/Your bloodshot eyes/Something something something?"

"Oh. Shit! That's [pre-Shikari band] Hybryd, 'Look Inside'."

**Correct.** *There's still a lot of Hybryd stuff on the internet, are you proud?*

"Yeah. You know, it's alright. Hybryd spanned from when I was about 15 to 17. It seems a long time ago now."

### QUESTION 9

What colour underpants did Enter Shikari drummer Rob Rolfe perform in when you played Download Festival back in 2009? Here's a clue: he wasn't wearing any trousers.

"Christ. Red?"

**Wrong.** *White with red trim.*

"Ah OK... I just had an image of him wearing red pants."



### QUESTION 10

Why were you forced to cancel a gig at Brighton's Empress Ballroom in January 2010?

"Was that one where we were soundchecking, and then the roof started dislodging and then bits of it started falling down?"

**Correct.** *The venue was shut due to health and safety issues*

"Apparently Prodigy had played there a few weeks before so I think they loosened it, and then we had to pay the price for their destruction."

## Total Score

# 5/10

*"I think that's a fair representation. My memory is normally shocking!"*

Go to [NME.COM/blogs](http://NME.COM/blogs) for the full Braincells hall of fame (and shame)



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